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April 1993
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ROLE PLAY FOR PC

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The famous role model for all AD&D® role-playing fantasies, the dreaded Temple Darkmoon is back.

More sinister, terrifying and haunting than ever. It will slowly weave into your sub-conscious and refuse to let go.



Through a clearing in the shadowy forest, a trio of towers rise menacingly into the night sky. You are on the threshold of terror, one wrong move and it's curtains. Finito.

The exciting sequel to Eye of the Beholder is here. Bigger. Better. And so realistic you'll keep looking over your shoulder.

The improved "point 'n' click" interface lets you come face-to-face with the most gruesome characters and complex clues.

In fact, you'll only want to stop playing this State-of-the-Art adventure game for one reason. To pinch yourself and prove you're not in the middle of a nightmare.

Available on: PC (EGA, VGA/ MCGA (256 Colour). 640k RAM and Hard disk required. Supports AdLib™, Soundblaster™ and compatibles). Amiga version coming soon.

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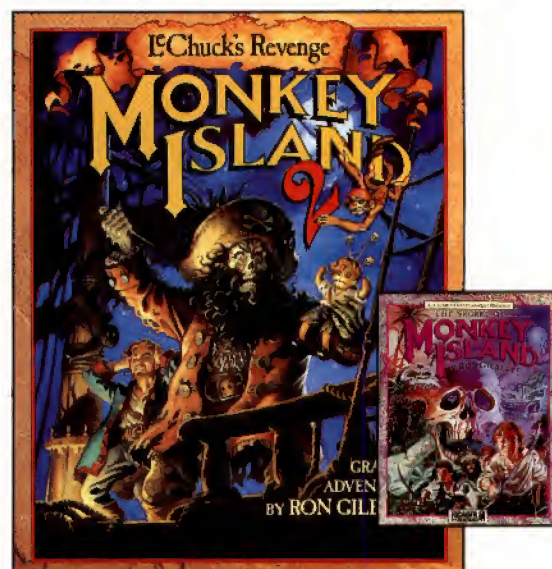


LAUGHS FOR PC

Side-splitting pirate adventure

Just when you thought it was the end for LeChuck, he's back.

The legend states that "when LeChuck wants you dead, you're dead" - grim news for his old adversary, young Guybrush Threepwood.



But fear not. Big Whoop holds the key to great power. All is not lost.

In this stunning graphic sequel, young Guybrush's adventures will have you rolling in hysterics. Beware, you'll laugh so hard, milk will flow from your nose.

Behind every pirate is a really gnarly chair and in front of Guybrush is a saga so savage it'll put hairs on your chest.



With 256 colours (PC version), variable difficulty modes, interactive reggae music and "point 'n' click" interface, you'll be transported to Monkey Island in a flash.

So, brace yourself, the fun starts here. Who knows when it will stop?

Available on: Amiga (32 colours) and PC (VGA/ MCGA. Requires 640k Ram AT or compatible. Supports AdLib™, Roland™, Soundblaster™ and SoundMaster™II sound cards. Hard drive required.

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A serious PC experience

U.S. Gold Ltd., Units 2/3, Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX, England. Tel: 021 625 3366

SPORT FOR PC

Play a round All year round

It's raining cats and dogs outside, but it's a beautiful crisp Spring day on the Torrey Pines Golf Course.

You approach the tee, driver in hand. Gazing down the fairway, you notice every feature of this classic Pacific Ocean Links course.



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So, put on your sun visor and practice your swing. You're next on the tee.

Available on:
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640k and Hard disk
required. Supports:
AdLib™, Soundblaster™,
MSound™ sound cards)

Amiga version coming soon.



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ACCESS

FLIGHT FOR PC

A Simulation to take your breath away

Hard on the tail of Jetfighter I, the mind-blowing combat sequel is airborne.

Jetfighter II: Advanced Tactical Fighter shoots Top Gun down in flames.



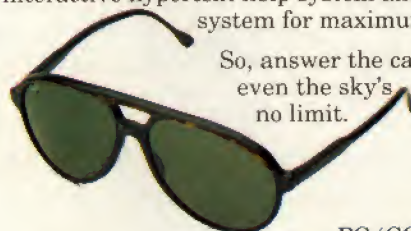
Strap yourself in as the most advanced and powerful 3D technology takes to the skies, with you as pilot whatever the time of day or night.

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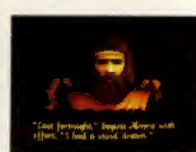
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April 1993
Launch Issue



Paul Lakin The Editor



PC ZONE

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"We've left a bit of space for you to write an intro," they said. "After all it is our first issue," they said. So what do I say? Hello and welcome to our first issue? Unoriginal but polite. *PC Zone* is the first UK magazine devoted solely to the world of PC games. Each month we'll be bringing you the most in depth reviews and previews and keeping you up to date with what's going on in the industry. If it concerns games it'll be in *PC Zone*. Now who are these "They" people anyway?

REVIEWS

46 Complete Chess System

IF NIGEL SHORT has inspired you to set your sights on a Grand Master title then this could be the chance to hone your skills.

60 Dune 2

A COMPLETE contrast to the original *Dune* game. Part *Sim City*, part shoot 'em-up and no sign of Sting anywhere.

52 Legend Of Myra

FOR THOSE of you who like showing off your brain and finger power and pretending to be a ninja rabbit then here's some action for you.

43 Lemmings 2

THE LITTLE blue folk are back, still trying to throw themselves off anything and everything but now there are 12 tribes of them.

66 Ragnarok

IF YOU PREFER your chess served up with a flagon of Bulls Blood then cast an eye over this ancient Viking board game.

57 Reach For The Skies

NO SIGN OF Douglas Bader but plenty of other sterling RAF types in a Battle Of Britain sim that allows you to be pilot or controller.

34 Shadowlands

THE SEQUEL TO *Shadowlands* is a science fiction role playing strategy game with a lot of light and dark and not a small amount of action.

38 Stunt Island

IF YOUR IDEA of playing a flight sim is turning your plane upside down and flying it under a bridge then this could very well be for you.

68 Tegel's Mercenaries

EARN MONEY by killing people. Better still by getting your employees to kill people. A strategy game for the financially acquisitive.

32 Transarctica

IMAGINE A world encased in snow, populated by wolves and mammoths but where the trains still run on time. That's *Transarctica*.

26 Ultima Underworld 2

IN AN ISSUE full of sequels this is the one that everyone was holding their breath for. Was it worth risking asphyxiation?

BLUEPRINTS

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TOP CLASS FLIGHT technology meets top class basketball star. Laurence Scotford checks out the results.

82 Little Devil

PAUL LAKIN casts a satanic eye over some devilishly good arcade action from Gremlin.

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EXCEPTIONAL 3D space action previewed by the exceptionally three dimensional David McCandless.

70 Tornado

IT'S TIPPED TO BE one of the hottest flight sims of the year; Duncan MacDonald has a look at *Tornado* and sees a lot of maps.

16 X-Wing

THE LONG AWAITED space shoot 'em-up is nearing completion - find out whether it will be worth the wait.





Win an Avirex
Jacket worth £400
on page 64



Win a Multi-media
System worth
£1200 on
page 54



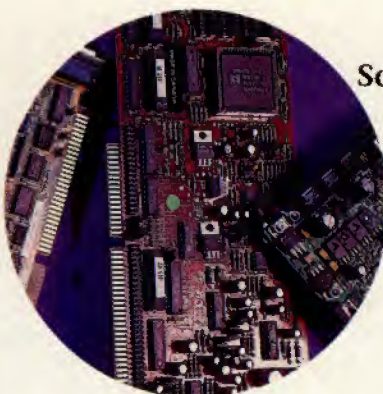
PART 2

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FEATURES

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IF YOU WANT your game to sound as good as it looks then check out our guide to the world of the soundcard.



Eight top
Soundboards
tested on
page 78

REGULARS

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SIX PAGES of news and previews to whet your appetite for what you'll be seeing over the next few months.

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YOU'VE RIPPED the disk off the cover, stuck it in your A: drive and nothing's happened. Turn here to find out your next move.

54 Competition

GO AHEAD and make your day by entering our competition and winning an absolutely superb £1200 Multi Media System. Smart.

64 Competition

WIN YOURSELF a fabulous leather jacket worth £400 plus 15 copies of *Harrier Jump Jet*.

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MASSIVE SYSTEM error every time you even look at your keyboard? Mark Burgess has a soothing answer to all your technical anxieties.

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THE BEST things in life are free as you'll see as Mark Burgess introduces you to the world of PD and Shareware games.

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A COMPLETE guide to which games you can buy plus some recommendations about what you might actually want to buy.

120 Zoneware

GET YOUR HANDS on some excellent shareware games and utilities for incredible bargain prices.

122 Mr Cursor

ARE YOU worried about your PC? Then spare a thought for Mr Cursor, he's terrified of his.

PC ZONE

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BAD NEWS FOR HEDGEHOGS



At last console action for your PC! Best Selling Zool - The Ninja of the Nth Dimension is on his way. Hedgehogs beware!

"Spectacular: fast and smooth animation"
The Times

"A great game and a zippy personality"
Sunday Observer

"Quite simply a stunning game"
BBC Radio 1

Available now on PC compatibles
(386 recommended)



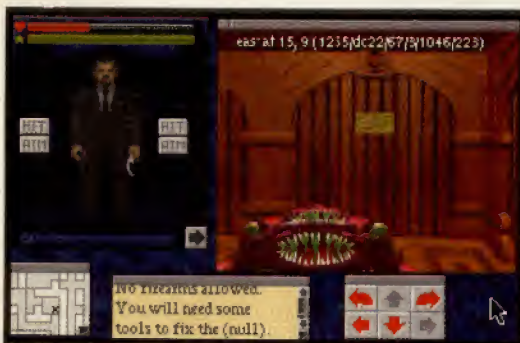
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SHEFFIELD S1 4FS.

Bulletin

Strike Commander

An ideological mercenary outfit may seem something of a contradiction in terms. However that is how the team of *Strike Commander* see themselves. In a world where nation states have broken up to be replaced by all powerful multi national corporations they are the nearest thing to the good and the pure. This set up is the cue for some outstanding 3D flight action in a cinematic environment. With two types of fighters to fly and fourteen different types to shoot down, the game promises to be "the most powerful 3D system ever written for a PC."

Publisher: Origin/Electronic Arts
Price: £44.99 Out: April

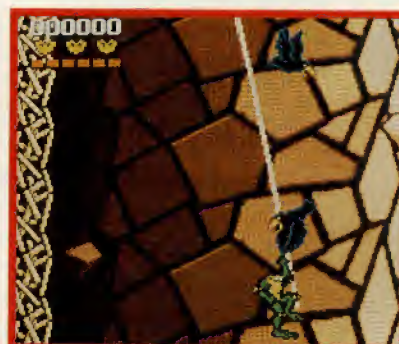


The Legacy

As the last remaining member of the Winthrop family, you're probably quite pleased to be told

you've inherited a substantial property (estate-agent-speak for large house). After all, a bit of real estate never did anyone any harm. Or did it? This is a house with a... er... history and as any reader of Agatha Christie or Enid Blyton will know, this is usually a recipe for disaster. It's certainly a recipe for a 3D role playing game using a point and click interface, auto mapping and a host of very unpleasant house guests who are after more than just the Twiglets. Developed in connection with Magnetic Scrolls, the game uses the same system of interactive windows as seen in games like *Wonderland*. It also drips nightmarish horror thanks to some decidedly smart 3D graphics.

Publisher: MicroProse Price: £44.99 Out: March



Battletoads

+ Without wanting to be toadally predictable and making lots of amphibious jokes it's worth noting that *Battletoads* is finally about to burst onto the screens. Excellent and varied arcade action that'll knock the turtles into a three corner shell.

Publisher Mindscape
Price tba Out: April

Shadow of the Comet

Following its success with the Lovecraft-inspired 3D graphic adventure, *Alone in the Dark*, French publisher Infogrames is currently creating it's first official game based upon Lovecraft's *Cthulu Mythos*. *Shadow of the Comet* is set in the New England town of Isthmus, in which strange goings on are discovered by the astronomer John T. Carter, who has set out to prove the theory of eccentric British Scientists: that the night sky over Isthmus doesn't appear as it should do. While in Isthmus, Carter uncovers a dark cult trying to open a pathway for the Ancient Ones mentioned in the *Necronomicon* to return to Earth. Carter must prevent the ancient gods from succeeding in their plans, or the Earth

will face a new dark age. This stunning graphic adventure uses the advanced techniques employed in *Eternam*. This not only allows the designers to incorporate 100 impressive locations, but also large close-up animations of important actions, or the faces of the games' forty characters.

Publisher: Infogrames
Price tba Out: 25 March



Hired Guns

+ Set in the deadly, future world of *Graveyard*, this strategic shoot 'em-up and exploration game has you and a rival running around an inhospitable planet in a race to meet your objectives first - be that rescuing a hostage or just finding the way out. Four 3D views are displayed on screen at once, and a clever system of overlaid windows is used to provide each player with all the information and statistics necessary for survival.

Publisher: Psygnosis Price: tba Out: April



Virtual Flight

A new addition to the range of joysticks currently available, is the *Freeflight Virtual Joystick*, which utilises the same technology as *The Freewheel*. This unusual stick has no base but can be rested on the table or chair edge or your knee. Movements are detected by optical sensors that monitor the tilting of the stick. The two fire-buttons are mounted on the top of the stick. *Freeflight* connects to a standard game port and will work with any flight simulation, although it is primarily designed for helicopter simulations like *Gunship 2000*. *Freeflight* costs £39.95 and is available from RC Simulations. 0272 550900



Zool

This game should need no introduction since by now you'll have played the demo to death. However, just in case the

cover disk was half inched, Zool the character is an interstellar cosmic dweller and Zool the game consists of fast-paced platform action over a myriad of different screens.

Publisher Gremlin Price £29.99 Out: March

Tony La Russa Baseball II

+ Arcade action meets stats a go-go in the sequel to last year's award winning game. Each player's statistics are so accurate the game even knows whether he slides feet first or hands first. Not that we're easily swayed by gimmicks. Oh dear me, no.

Publisher SSI/US Gold Price tba Out: March



Veil Of Darkness

+ Vlad's the lad this year thanks to the Coppola version of Bram Stoker's classic. Not only are Psygnosis working on the official licence but everyone else is getting in on the vamp act. *Veil Of Darkness* is set in Transylvania where the hero, having survived a plane crash, finds himself in a village still haunted and dominated by the vampire, Kaim. A horrific adventure with all the stuff of a gothic nightmare and some very appealing 'viewed from above' graphics. *Veil* is seriously challenging and very addictive. In a style of game that's becoming increasingly popular it should easily be up there with the very best of them.

Publisher: SSI/US Gold
Price: tba Out: March



Van Helsing (Anthony Hopkins) and friends lay one of Dracula's victims to rest in a scene from Francis Ford Coppola's film of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.

minutes of original footage from the film, and the sets of the movie have been faithfully recreated for the major scenes of the game. Combining digitised live action with advanced graphics techniques developed over three years on Silicon Graphics computers, *Dracula* may well prove to be one of the first CD products to truly exploit the power of the medium. *Dracula* will initially be released on Sega CD, but a PC CD-ROM version should become available before the end of 1993.

Dracula Bytes!

Psygnosis' first major, dedicated CD game is to be a gothic adventure based on Francis Ford Coppola's recent film of Bram Stoker's classic novel, *Dracula*. Several years of concentrated research and development, plus millions of pounds of investment will finally pay off for Psygnosis this year, as the first fruits of its CD-ROM development programme appear. *Dracula* leads the six dedicated CD-ROM titles planned for this year. The player takes on the role of the vampire obsessed Jonathan Harker as he hunts down Dracula and tackles him in his various forms. The quest features fifteen

DISPATCHES

+++ IF YOUR LIFELONG AMBITION has been to relive Isaac Asimov's *Fantastic Voyage*, and get under someone's skin along with Raquel Welch, then Psygnosis has the perfect game for you. *Microcosm* is to be the second dedicated CD release from the Liverpool-based publisher, and it is set inside a human body, into which a miniaturised submersible and its crew have been injected. The body in question belongs to the president of the world's largest corporation, who is being manipulated via a minute electronic receiver implanted within him. Your objective, as pilot of the submersible, is to destroy the device and save the president's life.

Psygnosis has used its state-of-the-art Silicon Graphics computers to render incredible, realistic images of the interior of the human body, populated by other implanted craft as well as the natural antibodies, all of which must be avoided.

The action is accompanied by a complete CD-quality score, performed by the famous keyboard guru, and one-time member of the wild and wacky Yes, Rick Wakeman. *Microcosm* will initially be available on FM Towns, but a PC CD-ROM version is expected before the end of 1993.

+++ MEANWHILE ACTIVISION are still making an honest crust off the classic Infocom text adventures. *Return To Zork* boasts added graphics, animation and sound using (gasp) real actors.

+++ ACCOLADE ARE GETTING all sporty having signed up licensing agreements with ice hockey star Brett Hull and football maestro Pelé to endorse their first hockey and football simulations (respectively!). Brett Hull, of St Louis Blues is one of the highest paid players in NHL History, Top Goal Scorer in 1990 (72 goals in 80 games) and Voted Most Popular All-Star Player by fans in 1991. Pelé who has played 1,366 games and scored 1,282 goals, and is the only man to have played on three World Cup winning sides, was chosen by an international poll of journalists as Sportsman of the Century and of course was responsible for Gordon Banks' legendary save.

+++ ON THE EDUTAINMENT (who came up with that word? Why are they still alive?) front Accolade are set to release *Snoopy's Game Club* consisting of three educational games; *Charlie Brown's Picture Pairs*, *Snoopy's Animated Puzzles* and *Woodstock's Look-Alikes*. Can't wait.

Bulletin

Wacky Funsters

If cute makes you puke then look out for this weird and wonderful piece of software with five not terribly serious games - *Big Guys With Muscles*, *Roadkill!*, *Rambi vs Blambo*, *Ping and Steroids*.

Publisher: Accolade
Price: £19.99 **Out:** March



Dizzy Collection

+ Having conquered the world of console The Codies are turning their eyes to the PC market. First off, surprise, surprise will be the egg headed, Dizzy. *The Dizzy Collection* features *Fantasy World Dizzy*, *Kwik Snax*, *Fast Food* and *Dizzy: Prince of the Yolk Folk*. It will be followed up by series of products at £9.99. And you bought that 486 'cos you thought it was for serious games.

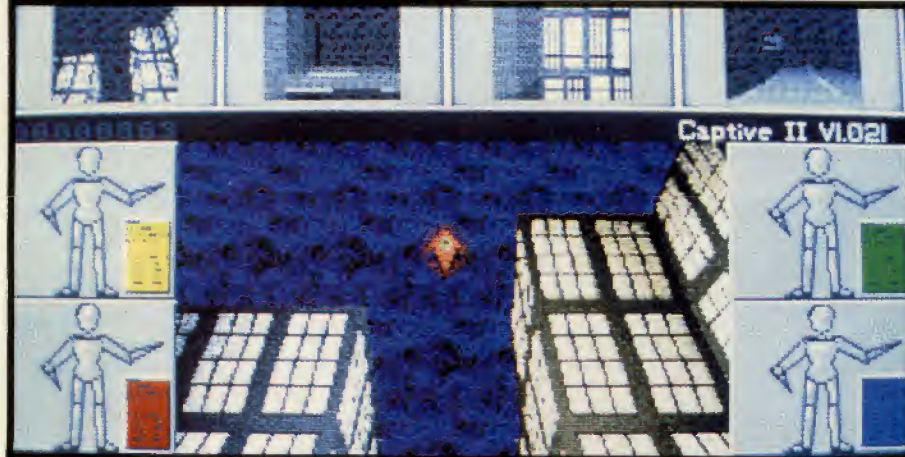
Publisher: Codemasters **Price** £35.99 **Out:** Spring



Captive 2

Famous programming geezer Tony Crowther, is about to stun the gamesplaying world once again with a sequel to his maze-based RPG/shoot 'em-up, *Captive*. *Captive 2* sports a revolutionary new graphics system in which bitmapped graphics can be mapped onto 3D walls. The maze thus created is roamed by many weird, texture mapped 3D polygon creatures, which can be viewed from a variety of angles.

Publisher: Mindscape **Price** tba **Out:** May



A Wheely Great Idea

+ The latest PC control gadget from flight add-on specialist RC Simulations is a Virtual Steering Wheel designed for motor racing games. *The Freewheel Logic* is a replica racing car wheel, specifically designed to be used instead of a joystick with driving games like MicroProse's *Grand Prix*. The wheel is held in the hands and does not have to be attached to the desk or table like a normal wheel or yoke. Steering can be achieved by simply turning it left or right, and acceleration or braking can also be applied by tipping the wheel forwards or backwards. The wheel has fire-buttons placed within the rim in the position that the gear changing buttons would be found on a real racing car, so that gear changes can be made without having to reach for the keyboard. *The Freewheel* costs £39.95 and is available from RC Simulations 0272 550900.



Fields of Glory: The Road to Waterloo

MicroProse has already made its mark in the war game genre, by publishing the definitive multi-scenario simulators, *UMS* and *UMS II*. Now it looks set to reinforce its position with a graphically superb Napoleonic war game. The game covers the period after Napoleon's exile to Elba in 1814. During this time Napoleon rebuilt his army and once again began to ravage Europe. *Fields of Glory* recreates 6 battles which can be fought individually or as a campaign. The player can choose to command the forces of Blucher, Wellington or Napoleon, and play against the computer or another player via a modem or null modem. The major appeal of the game is likely to be the incredibly detailed representation of the battlefield and the intuitive point, click and drag interface.

Publisher: MicroProse **Price** tba **Out:** May



D-Day

Having produced the curiously appealing *Panza Kick Boxing*, Futura have now turned their attention to a strategy game based on the Normandy Landings. Well, they both involve Panzers. The game mixes macro strategy with small scale arcade combat involving bombers, parachutists, infantry and tanks (the last of these using the Sherman M4 system since Futura were responsible for that too). *D-Day* allows you to change some variables to play at "What if". What would have happened if Hitler had been woken earlier in the day/one of the German Panzer divisions hadn't counter attacked so early? Alternatively you can keep everything as it was and see just how difficult D-Day was to win. There's also a software prize to the first person who writes in and tells us why D-Day was called D-Day.

Publisher: Futura/US Gold
Price: tba **Out:** April

Dark Sun: Shattered Lands

If your idea of a good day out is travelling a bleak desert world attempting to recruit a rebel force to overthrow a Sorcerer King then *Dark Sun* is for you. If your idea of a good game is one with eight direction scrolling and full screen 256 colour graphics then you're in luck too. A follow-up expansion disk will increase the world's scope by up to 40%. You can never get too much of a good desert.

Publisher: SSI/US Gold
Price: tba **Out:** April



Premier Manager

+ There are those who think there's more than enough football on our screens. Software houses are not amongst them, as Gremlin proves with its addition to a crowded market. The game allows you to indulge in all aspects of management from buying and selling players, finding sponsors, setting wages, ground improvements to (thrill of thrills) answering the telephone and receiving faxes. At the end of a successful season you can prove how mercenary the whole thing is by kissing good bye to your lowly club ("I'd die for this team"), and joining a team with more profile and a more satisfying salary.

Publisher: Gremlin **Price:** tba **Out:** April/May.

Xenobots

+ Alien robots are attacking Earth and laying waste to the entire planet. The only defence that gives Earth and its inhabitants an outside chance of survival is the army of retro-fitted robots stolen from the enemy. This futuristic combat simulator features stunning 3D views of ray-traced robots battling each other during the day, or even at night with the help of infra-red cameras. Control up to 25 Xenobots of three types in each battle with complete control over mapping, communication, visual controls and, best of all, multiple weapon systems.

Publisher: Electronic Arts **Price:** £39.99 **Out:** late March.



Realms Of Arkania: Blade Of Destiny

Germans don't give D&D the time of day and wouldn't give Rune Quest a cheese roll if it was

starving. For them the best paper and pencil role-playing game is *Das Schwarze Auge* which has now been converted onto PC as the *Realms Of Arkania* series. First of the series, *Blade Of Destiny*, involves a quest through 52 towns and villages in search of the sword of Grimring and has won a crop of awards in Germany. The game gives you simultaneous control of up to eight characters, who can be moved round as a group or independently. Each character has more characteristics than you can shake a multi sided die at. As well as positive characteristics there are negative attributes such as greed, superstition and phobias. All this and 80 spells too should have RPGers rolling on their backs and waving their hairy little feet in the air. As a side note the soundtrack is available on CD which is a bit alarming.

Publisher: Attic/US Gold **Price:** tba **Out:** April

DISPATCHES

+++ FOR BIGGER CHILDREN Capstone are working on *Wayne's World*, a graphic adventure in which you must save their show from cancellation and say "Not" a lot (rather like Paul Daniels... think about it) Other film/TV-based games that Capstone have underway include *Home Alone 2* (oh dear) and *LA Law*.

+++ ON THE MORE BIZARRE SIDE is *Terminator 2 - Cyber Chess*. No Kings and Queens or badly made *Alice in Wonderland* pieces in this - just 3D killing machines that take being checked very seriously.

+++ FROM THE BIZARRE TO THE ridiculous, the reason that Al Lowe, the creator of *Leisure Suit Larry*, has been so quiet of late is that he's been beavering away at the first comic adventure to feature a completely new character. *Freddy Pharkus* is set in the wild west, and promises plenty of inept gun-slinging action.

+++ NIGEL "MR.INTERESTING" Mansell may have ended his Formula 1 career, but now budding racing champions can step into his shoes in the latest Grand Prix simulation, Gremlin's *Nigel Mansell's World Championship*. All the Formula One courses are featured, along with variable car performance depending on how the car is set up and what the weather is like. Nigel himself provides track side tips during training sessions.

+++ THE LAST COUPLE OF Interplay games to be released in Europe through Electronic Arts are set for March release. These are the space race strategy game *Buzz Aldrin's Race Into Space*, which allows you to dabble in 3D types of hardware and go on 300 space missions, and *Battle Chess 4000* complete with a translucent board and digitised clay models. The game already knows 300,000 moves, and learns as it plays. Under their own steam Interplay have released *Rags To Riches*, a stock market strategy game and, in contrast, *The Lost Vikings*, 37 levels of arcade action with great chunks of puzzle solving thrown in too.

+++ ALONG WITH THE REST OF the world LucasArts are getting well into interactive CD-ROM adventures with *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis* leading the pack. *Day of The Tentacle (Maniac Mansion 2)* is due for simultaneous CD-ROM and PC release. There's also *Rebel Assault* to look forward to, a CD-ROM arcade game based on *Star Wars*.

Bulletin

Ringworld

Set in a world so immense that it could hold a million Earths (bet it's still a beggar to find a cashpoint in though) *Ringworld* challenges you to seek the solution to a plot designed to throw all known space into chaos. Kzinti Assassins, an insane Patriarch and some beautiful hand painted, digitised backgrounds add up to a game on a seriously vast scale.

Publisher: Accolade **Price:** £39.99 **Out:** March



Escape to the Ringworld and search for the means to stop the Kzinti Patriarch's sinister revenge.

Seal Team

+ Imagine state-of-the-art 3D flight simulation technology combined with a ground combat game and you've imagined *Seal Team*, a revolutionary recreation of Covert Operations during the early years of the Vietnam War. Naturally, it's the Viet Cong who do all the nasty underhand stuff while your good-natured American boys are squeaky clean, but don't let that put you off sampling this unusual game. It contains 80 realistic missions based on actual events during the war, and during each you can select multiple views as you would in any flight sim.

Publisher: Electronic Arts **Price:** tba **Out:** March/April.



Batman Returns

+ If you're already pinin' for Ms Pfeiffer and her catsuit, keep an eye open for *Batman Returns* showing at PC near you soon.

Publisher: Konami
Price: tba **Out:** March/April

Fatty Bear's Birthday Surprise

The loveable Fatty Bear is the dumpy hero of the latest graphic

adventure for kids from the makers of *Putt Putt Joins the Parade*. There are objectives to achieve on each screen, but children can also have fun by exploring the objects in each room, most of which will animate when clicked. Humongous Entertainment are also to release a games compendium for younger children featuring the car Putt Putt, called *Putt Putt's Fun Pack*. This will come packaged with a pencil and ruler set.

Publisher: Humongous Entertainment/Electronic Arts **Price:** tba **Out:** PC April/CD May



El-Fish

Now this is odd. Very odd. It's also Russian.

The two facts may not be unrelated. *El-Fish* gives you the opportunity to create not only your own fish tank but also the fish within it. Either go for the unadventurous approach by selecting from the fish on offer or dabble in a bit of cross breeding to produce whole new species. Then, having designed your fish tank (complete with cat's paw and scuba diver), simply sit back and watch. As we said. Odd. Very odd.

Publisher: Mindscape
Price: tba **Out:** March



Radio Daze

If you've ever stood on the top of a windswept hill, watching somebody showing off with a radio controlled aircraft and thought "I could do that", then now you can prove yourself right at a fraction of the cost. **RC Aerochopper** is a highly realistic radio controlled aircraft simulator which uses a genuine Futaba transmission box which connects to your PC and controls the simulated aircraft in the program. A selection of aeroplanes, helicopters, ducted fan jets and gliders can be simulated, along with any wind condition, making this perfect for practising those tricky manoeuvres before you try them for real. RC simulations is currently developing a virtual hat which will detect head movements and allow you to control your view of the simulated model independently. Contact RC Simulations on 0272 550900 for details.

Space Hulk

Games Workshop's Warhammer 40,000 rules gained a seriously smart add-on in the shape of the *Space Hulk* board game. Now EA has turned to an even smarter computer game. *Space Hulk* has you controlling a band of space marines as they prowl through derelict space ships searching for the monstrous Genestealers. Imagine playing the film *Aliens*, and you come close to the *Space Hulk* experience. It's one of the most atmospheric games we've seen, and features a nifty 'Freeze Time' system which combines furious shoot 'em-up action with engaging strategy.

Publisher: Electronic Arts. **Price:** tba **Out:** March/April



Where in Space is Carmen Sandiego?

The most notorious criminal mind in the universe is back in the latest game of logic and deduction for young 'uns. This time the most wanted woman has escaped from jail and is plaguing the solar system with a spate of thefts. It's up to you to track down the members of her gang and then the evil lady herself by following up clues in the extensive on-line database. The pack also includes a book of facts and figures on the solar system and space exploration in general.

Publisher: Broderbund/Electronic Arts **Price:** tba **Out:** May



DISPATCHES

+++ **OCEAN HAVE ALREADY** snapped up the licence to *Jurassic Park* the new Spielberg dinosaur movie. There's a joke about dinosaurs just crying out to be made here. If only we could think what it was. In no way linked to the word 'dinosaur' is Konami's *Elite 2*, sequel to the classic space trade and shoot 'em-up. David Braben programmer of both the original and sequel claims *Elite 2* "is what *Elite* should have been."

+++ **RETURNING TO EARTH**, Maxis' *SimFarm* is a countrified *SimCity* where you plough your way through buying seeds and livestock, rotating crops and investing in new machinery whilst grappling with the weather, market prices and encroaching urbanisation. Could be a bit of a sod, ho, ho. Oh never mind.

+++ **AND TO PLAY ALL THESE** games on? How about the **Gravis PC GamePad** that combines joystick with joypad for a price of £24.99. It's due for release in April though there've been some import copies knocking around.

+++ **IF YOU'RE HAVING TROUBLE** getting your hands on any of these products you'll be pleased to hear that a new string of computer shops is to be built by Peter Rigby, owner of **Specialist Computer Holdings**. He plans at least 14 out of town superstores, each carrying about 5,000 product lines. The new chain, to be called **Byte**, will put pressure on retailers such as **Comet** and **Dixons**. Mr Rigby believes that the UK could support up to 200 superstores but others in the industry aren't so sure. A number have already opened in the UK and they are not doing particularly well.

+++ **TO END ON A SERIOUS NOTE**, Microsoft has admitted that there is a bug in versions 4.01 and 5.0 of the **CHKDSK** utility. **CHKDSK** is used to check the integrity of a disk. With the /F switch it should repair any errors. The problem occurs when **CHKDSK/F** is used with hard disks formatted to 127 - 129, 254 - 256, 508 - 516, 1018 - 1024 or 2035 - 2061Mb. These sizes apply to partitions as well as physical drives. When **CHKDSK** finds errors it asks 'Convert lost chains to files (Y/N)?'. If you answer N, 256 copies of the FAT (File Allocation Table) are written over the first 32Mb of the hard disk. This means that you lose the root directory, the system files and whatever else is in that space. There is a fix in maintenance release 5.0A, available from Microsoft.



Dogfight

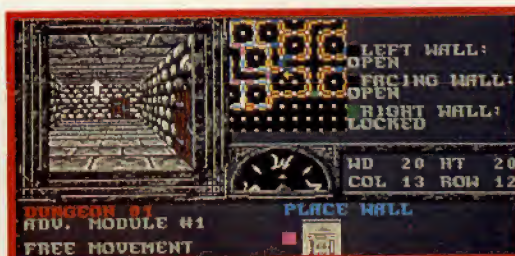
At last, no noncing about with waypoints and reconnaissance missions. Here's a game that concentrates on the most important section of a flight sim, the dogfight. With twelve aircraft to choose from and no constraints of historical accuracy (you wanna take up a Sopwith Camel against a F-16A? You just go ahead), it's a gift for the imaginative. The game also includes six realistic scenarios ranging from WWI to the Falklands so you can treat it seriously as well.

Publisher: MicroProse **Price:** £44.99 **Out:** March.

Unlimited Adventures: Construction Kit

Dungeon Masters are society's lonely outcasts. Sad people much given to graph paper. However this adventure design kit for *Forgotten Realms* should bring some light into their lives. With 112 monsters and 16 non player characters to play around with, the sky, or rather the dungeon's, the limit.

Publisher:SSI/US Gold **Price:** tba **Out:** March



BOOT Up!

Welcome to the very first *PC Zone* cover disks. Over the coming months we'll be using the disks to bring you the very best in playable demos of forthcoming hot games, the very latest completely playable shareware games, and one or two surprise extras that you won't find on the disks of other PC magazines. We kick off with a flying visit from *Zool – Ninja of the "Nth" Dimension*, a brand new complete game from Apogee, the masters of shareware, and the first of our surprise extras: an exclusive new adventure for *Legends of Valour*.



Zool – Ninja of the "Nth" Dimension



LET'S GET ONE thing straight, *Sonic the Hedgehog* is juggernaut fodder. As far as we're concerned *Sonic* has got nothing on *Zool*, but we have! One whole level in fact. Our fully playable demo contains the complete first level from Sweet World. So don't say we never give you anything... unless you want a nunchuka in your back!

How to play

To start the playable demo of *Zool*, change the current directory to the one in which you have installed the demo files and type 'Zool'.

Press space at the title screen to reconfigure the game. Use the cursor keys or the joystick to change options and press the fire button or 'Return' key to exit the option screen and use the current options.

Your objective is to collect a set number of sweets from the level and then make it safely to the exit, while avoiding the bad guys.

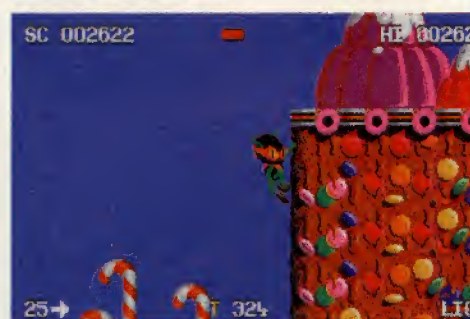
Controls

Use joystick or cursor keys to run, climb, crouch and jump. INSERT or joystick button to fire.

HINT: Look out for hidden rooms and bonuses!



Jump to reach platforms.



Climb up walls by reverse absailing!



Crouch to shoot at close enemies on the ground.



Hit signs to restart from that point after you die.



Collect flying hearts for extra health.

Legends of Valour: The Extra Bit

EXPLORE A new *Legends Of Valour* landscape in eye stretching wide screen and find a fairly dodgy PC Zone office into the bargain. Thanks to Synthetic Dimensions, the team behind the original *Legends Of Valour*, you not only have the chance to wander round this new landscape admiring the scenery (and our pictures of course) you can also change it by loading your own wall designs. It's just a Saturday down at MFI.

How to install and play *Legends of Valour - The Extra Bit*

You must have the original *Legends of Valour* already installed on your hard drive before you can install this data set. Make sure that the files are installed in the LOV directory, or whichever directory contains your original *Legends of Valour* files. To install *Legends of Valour - The Extra Bit*, simply delete the file LOVPLUS.BAT from the *Legends of Valour* directory.

To run the game, start *Legends of Valour* as normal by typing LOV, and a new 'demo' icon will appear on your title screen. Click on this to start the game.

The control system is exactly the same as the *Legends of Valour* 'roller mode' - the left mouse button moves you forward, moving the mouse left and right turns you round, and the space bar speeds you up - with the addition that holding down the CTRL key with the space bar will increase ship speed even more. Press 'Escape' to quit.

Y *Legends of Valour*

This bit is for specky techies only - followers of *Cursor* have been warned!

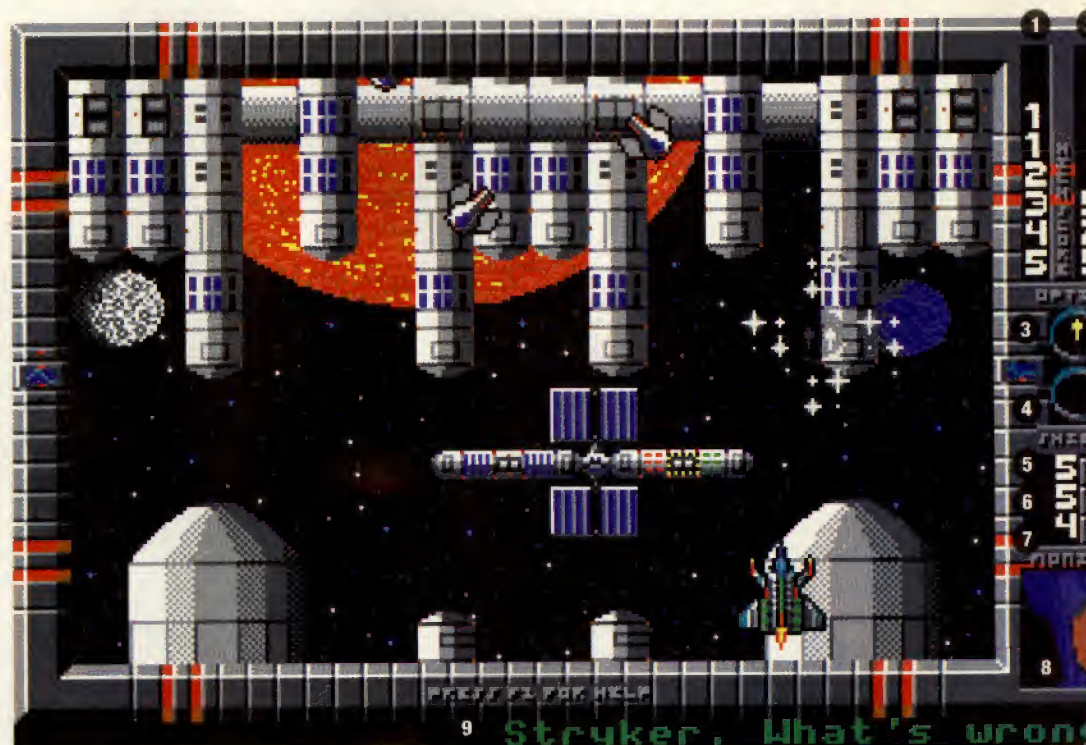
The wall panel definitions for this demo are contained in OSWALLS.LBM (Outside Walls) and IWALLS.LBM (Inside Walls), both of which can be loaded into DPAINT (or any other package that will edit LBM files), edited and saved out again. There are only two rules to follow.

- (a) Doors must remain doors of some kind or other to facilitate entry.
- (b) The panels are drawn using palette entries (20H) to 63 (3FH). You may change these colours as you so wish, but a second, darker set of these colours is required from entries 64 (30H) to (5FH) to maintain the shading effects. Changing any other colours will affect other elements of the demo.

Mah Jongg

THIS IS AN excellent shareware version of the ancient Chinese tile game. In this solitaire form of the game the tiles must be removed in pairs from a complicated stack, the aim being to remove all the tiles without getting stuck. This version of the game is also set up so that you can design your own tile sets, if you wish. Detailed instructions can be found in the text files that are supplied with the game. We urge you to register this game if you like it.

- 1 The highest score obtained so far
- 2 Your score
- 3 Your current weapon type
- 4 Your current shield type (if any)
- 5 Number of shots that can be fired in a round
- 6 Number of Zap Bombs
- 7 Number of ships remaining
- 8 Communications monitor
- 9 Message line



Major Stryker

APOGEE HAVE been responsible for some great shareware games in the past, *Duke Nukem* and *Wolfenstein 3D* being two prime examples. PC Zone is proud to be able to bring you an exclusive early peek at the next Apogee hit, *Major Stryker*. This shoot 'em-up in the *Xenon* mould pitches you against four stages of alien menace, with three boss monsters and a final confrontation with the mothership. Get through all that and your sexy controller will be awaiting your return. Who said that being an intergalactic hero was so bad?

How to play

To start *Major Stryker*, log onto the directory in which you have installed it and type Major.

Press any key twice to get to the main menu. Select an item from the menu using the cursor keys and the 'Return' key or by pressing the initial letter of that item.

To change control options, select Game Options.

Controls

Cursor keys or joystick for eight-directional movement. ALT or joystick button 1 to fire. SPACEBAR or joystick button 2 to release zap bombs.

'Select Instructions' from the main menu for instructions on how to play the game. If you enjoy this game, please register it. See main menu.

Coming Soon...

As a bonus, you'll find some sneak preview screens on the disks, which can be viewed by selecting them from the installation program.

How to install the disk programs

INSERT the disk into your drive and log onto that drive. Now type **Diskzone** to start the installation utility. Select the program that you wish to install by clicking on the relevant icon with the mouse, or by using the cursor keys and the Return key to confirm a selection.

***** **HELP!** *****

If you still have problems after following the loading instructions, then please phone our Helpline number before returning your disk. **Call Sam Miah on:**

COVER DISK HELPLINE 0274 736990

The Helpline operates between 9.00am and 4.30pm weekdays. If possible, please have your computer operating and your cover disk ready when you phone the Helpline. If your phone is not near the computer then please note down as much information about the fault as you can and have a pen and paper handy before you call.

If, having called the Helpline, you are advised that the disk needs returning, please place it in a padded envelope with a stamped, self-addressed envelope for the replacement disk, and send it to PC Zone Issue One Disk Replacements, TIB PLC, TIB House, 11 Edward Street, Bradford, BD4 7BH.

Please *do not* return faulty disks to PC Zone. We do not stock replacement disks, and will be unable to respond to requests for them. ☹

Blueprint

X-Wing

PUBLISHER: US Gold/LucasArts

PRICE: tba

TELEPHONE: 021 625 3388

OUT: March



HAVE THIS problem with gravity. Well it's not so much gravity as the ground. It keeps getting in the way. There I am cheerfully pottering about the blue skies over Kent with not a thought in my mind except the three ME109s on my tail. I execute a perfect

Immelman turn followed by a Lakin Flip Spin Special to shake them off and what happens? I'll tell you what happens. Before you've got the chance to say "There's mud in your eye Fritz" the ground rushes to meet you like a long lost love and within seconds you have mud in your eye, your navel and up your prop shaft.

Ah for the joys of space; no gravity and no ground. Unless of course you misjudge your dive by about 3,000 light years (and in my case nothing is impossible). All of which makes the imminent release of Lucas Arts' X-Wing more than a little exciting. The game is being developed by Lawrence Holland and Edward Kilham, who were behind the completely wonderful *Their Finest Hour* and *Secret Weapons Of The Luftwaffe*. From what we've seen of the game its hereditary genes are showing (as opposed to George Michael whose heredity shows through his jeans.)

Formal introductions

Games are frantically rushing away from being games and towards being multi media (or meeeeeeeja) entertainments.

It's rather like Pop music trying to get serious in the late sixties. This can only end in tears as the Art School Students take over and we're left with bands like *Genesis* and *Yes*. In the world of games we'll no doubt end up with whole graphic novels and no game. At least for now we have some pretty smart intro sequences just queuing up to fill up your hard drive.

Unless you've been drinking Wookie Blasters or have been in torpor (excess Wookie Blaster induced) for the last few months you'll probably have caught a

glimpse of the X-Wing intro but here it is again. Unlike most intros it's actually one you'll watch again and again. Thrill as your screen is filled with seriously large space craft. Gasp as Tie Fighters hurtle past you making the right sound, and swoon as you hear characters from the film talk in synch. "Incredible" as they would say if, by some strange twist of fate, *Star Wars* had been made in France.

As well as opening with all this cinematic wizardry, X-Wing also has other cinematic sequences scattered throughout the game. Which will be all fine and dandy provided there's some playability in-between. Which brings us onto the game itself. Ah there's nothing like a smooth link (and yes, I know, that was nothing like a smooth link)

Due to a confused childhood **Paul Lakin** was unable to feel affection for Princess Leia however at a rather odd party he did try to cop off with an X-Wing Fighter. (Needless to say he failed)



(Above) Gazing to your right you see one of your chums in trouble (Right) It's about time you stopped watching and started getting involved yourself







(Top) Ah, what a nice view through the side windows. (Above) Uh-Oh. Suddenly things are looking a lot less appealing. (Below) And in front they're looking downright dangerous.

Mission control

Before you're unleashed on the world as a fully fledged Rebel pilot you have to undergo a training section. I mean look son, these X-Wings they're not cheap if you get what I mean, they don't just grow on trees. We're not just giving them out to any old schmuck who comes along thinking he's a fly boy. So you'd better prove yourself on the obstacle course first.

After that the danger really starts. People start shooting at you. Lots of people. The game has fifty missions ranging from fairly basic escort duty to the ultimate battle in the trenches of the Death Star (Code named 'Operation Suicide')

X-Wing pays homage to its *Finest Hour* background by also allowing you to play three combat tours of duty. This means that the glory hunters among you can set their greedy little eyes on medals and promotion. Mind you, medals can be embarrassing. Silver Scimitar sounds suitably butch and manly but Diamond Eyes sounds suspiciously girly while Bronze Cluster sounds like something you'd have treated at one of those discreet clinics.

Flight the good flight

However all the medals and campaigns in the world aren't going to keep you playing if the combat plays like a dog. On first showing there's no hint of caninism. There are 3 different craft for you to fly, each with its own cockpit layout and each with 17 different viewpoints.

Although set in space, combat is closer to *TFH* than *Wing Commander*. Why you could almost be flying over Kent. Except there aren't many Imperial Storm Troopers in Kent. Which explains why Kent is so boring.

The action is all rendered in polygon graphics with bitmapped special effects and, from what we've seen, that means it's going to look pretty blinking' smart and play rather splendidly too.

With looks like that you're going to want some replays which is fortunate because otherwise it wouldn't have been worth LucasArts putting in a replay camera. Fortunate for you that is. Dead boring for your friends who have to sit through "This really brilliant bit where I shot down these three Tie Interceptors and a Shuttle... look just here, that's where one got on my tail so I had to do this mega dive and... hello where's everybody gone. Hello?"

On the sound front expect all the usual (for film licenses) samples and the ever present theme tune. X-Wing utilises the imUSE™ sound system which responds to changes in

the game action. However the best bit, as far as anyone in the PC Zone office is concerned is the noise of the Tie Fighter. That satisfying zzzssshwoosh noise impressions of which can get you banned from your local for spitting all over the customers.

Future wars

LucasArts seem to have recognised that the best part of *Star Wars* was the special effects, which basically means the space battles. X-Wing looks set to have all the excitement without any of the drippy bits. Just imagine all the fun of *Star Wars* without the slightly annoying Luke Skywalker or extremely annoying c3po.

And of course all the fun of the Battle Of Britain without any of the gravity. ☒



Creature Confronts

If you were expecting to come up against the heroes of the *Star Wars* film then you'll be a bit disappointed. You're a lowly rebel apprentice not some mega bucks earning screen star. However some of the films major characters are knocking around.



Of the race of Mon Calamari, the Admiral's career did not get off to the best of starts when, having convinced his comrades to rebel against the Empire, he was immediately captured. He was later rescued when his captors legged it from a Rebel attack. He is now something of a social disaster. Many a dinner party has ground to a halt when Ackbar sits back in his chair and says "Did I ever tell you about the time I was a prisoner of the Empire..."



What can you say about the man who's given his life to fashion. Surrounded by the New Age white clad Storm Troopers and New Romantic Rebels, Darth clings loyally to his black garb. In the evening he reads French Existential poetry and listens to Leonard Cohen albums before going out and massacring small children.

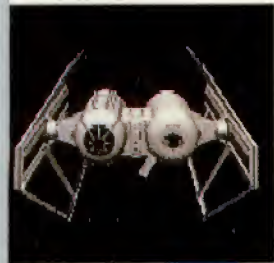


Where would *Star Wars*... no where would any film be without its minions. These cannon fodder of the cinema world carry out insane orders badly before being killed, usually by the disgruntled chief who issued the orders in the first place.

Flights Of Fancy

The Imperial Star Fleet is a pretty fearsome armada of death but should not be over estimated. Most of the craft are known as Tie, this is a galactic corruption of the word Thai. Conclusive proof that all Imperial star ships are built on the cheap by underpaid Oriental labour and will go wrong after about two weeks when you've lost the guarantee.

Tie Bomber



As opposed to the ultra destructive Star Destroyer this little beauty can be more selective in what it destroys. People to this day still talk in hushed tones of the time Capt. Wendi Wexmeister in his Tie Bomber "Laughing Cow" blew up Obi Wan Kenobi's pet cat Rodney at a range of 300 light

years without even singeing his litter tray.

Weapons; Two SFSnL-sl Laser Cannons (single or fire linked)
Two SFS M-s3 Concussion Missile Launchers (4 missiles each)
Two SFS T-S5 Proton Torpedo Launchers (2 torpedoes each).

Special Feature; Cigarette lighter plays the theme from *The Big Country*.

Tie Starfighter



The workhorse of the Empire fleet. (For workhorse read cannon fodder). Has less weapons and less armour than the X-Wing. However it's big on numbers (typical mass produced rubbish really) and God is on the side of the big battalions.

Weapons; Two SFS L-sl Laser Cannons (single or fire linked)

Special Feature; Automatically waves white flag and screams "I give up" if the odds drop to less than 3/1 in its favour.

Imperial Shuttle



Admiral Ackbar's escape from one. (Although he was forced to leave the massage girl behind)

Weapons; 10 Taim & Bak KX5 Laser Cannons (8 fwd and 2 aft)

Special Feature; Chilled drinks dispenser serving freshly squeezed orange juice.

Tie Interceptor



First things first. This craft was based on an original design by Darth Vader, so remarks that it handles like a horse and cart are best avoided. It is in fact the fastest starship around, with the possible exception of the Rebel A-Wing.

Weapons; Four SFS L-s9.3 Laser Cannons (single or fire linked)

Special Feature; Darth 4 Leia scratched into the left tail fin.

Imperial Class Star Destroyer



Big. Very big. What more can you say. Not only heavily armed in its own right the Destroyer also carries six Tie squadrons on board. The downer is of course that all this firepower costs. It takes the GDP of three major planets just to pay for the toilet paper.

Weapons; 60 Taim & Bak XX-9

Heavy Turbolasers (Computer assisted targeting)

60 Borstel NK-7 Ion Cannons (Computer assisted targeting)

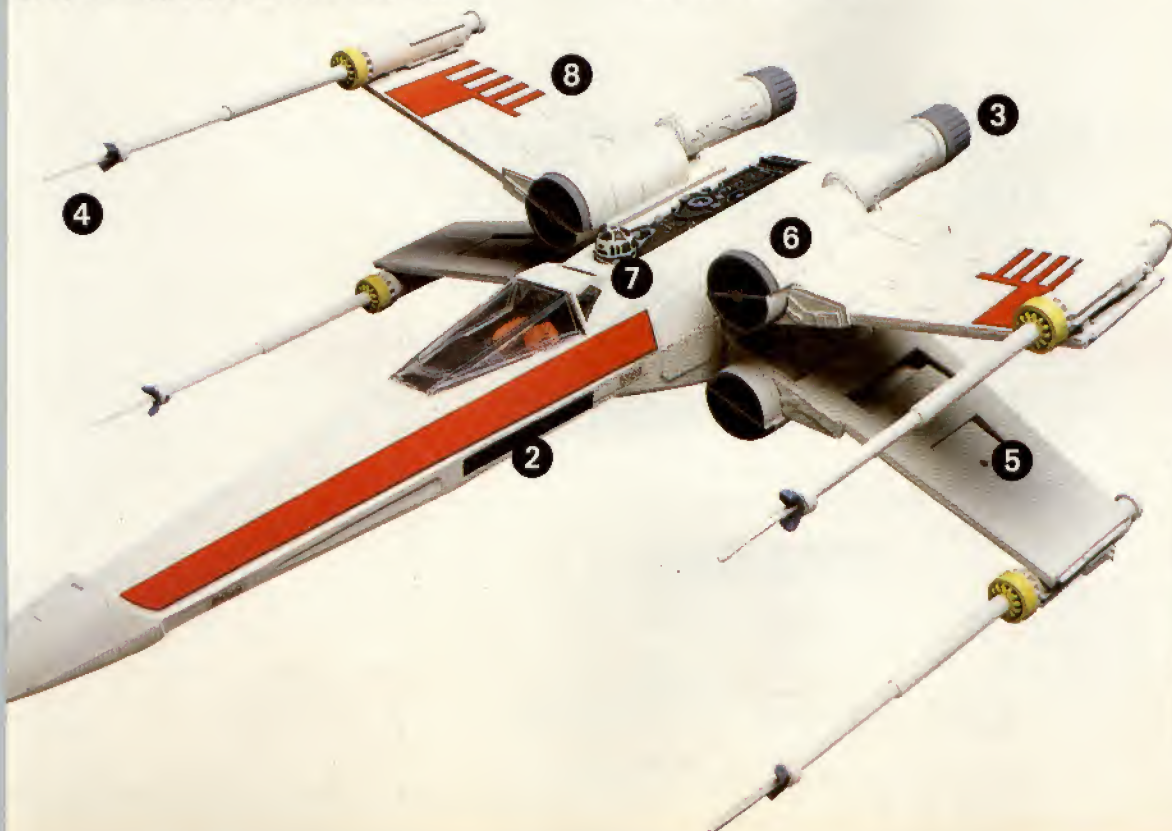
10 Phylon Q7 Tractor Beam Projectors.

Special Feature; Complementary towelling dressing gown (with ICSD monogram) in each bathroom.

X-WING

The spitfire of its day. The embodiment of all that is good and true and, rather like Spitfires, largely assembled from melted down frying pans and old kettles. X-Wings combine high speed with relatively heavy armour and the ability to travel in hyperspace. They laugh in the face of Tie Fighters and make rude noises at Tie Interceptors. Will only fight if the odds are outrageously in the Empire's favour. Which is fortunate, because they always are.

- 1 Sensor Systems** – for sensing things such as incoming fighters and missiles. Particularly sensitive to Darth Vader's cheap aftershave.
- 2 Proton Torpedo Launcher** – three torpedoes in each tube. Ideal for those difficult to shift opponents.
- 3 Fusial Thrust Engine Assembly** (1 of 4) – without which running away would be more difficult.
- 4 Laser Cannon** (1 of 4) – for opponents not worth wasting a torpedo on.
- 5 S Foll Wing** – adjustable for atmospheric flight.
- 6 Shield Projector** (1 of 4) – the thing that you cower shamelessly behind.
- 7 R2 Unit** – the thing that makes the beeping noise and makes people go all soppy when it get frazzled up.
- 8 Thruster Control Jets** (trailing edge of wing) – there's no point having thrust if you've got no control.



PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K

Minimum Processor: 386

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse, Joystick

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When the world's finest basketball player meets state-of-the-art flight simulation technology, sports sims take on a whole new dimension. **Laurence Scottford** pulls on his Nikes and goes one-on-one with Electronic Arts' revolutionary game.



SPORTS FANS have had a raw deal! Let's face it, go out and buy a sport simulation and you're expected to get excited about a few blobs of garishly coloured pixels skating about on a lime green background that just about passes for a football pitch, or it's assumed that

wiggling your joystick furiously back and forth like some sex-starved teenager is a suitable substitute for a 100 metre sprint.

Electronic Arts is about to redress the balance with a product provisionally entitled *Jordan In-Flight*. Basketball fans will instantly identify the man who lends his name to the first half of the title as Michael Jordan.

Arguably he's the most exciting

athlete playing today, certainly he's the best paid. His signature moves like the slam, the reverse lay-up and the pull-up jumper, have signalled Jordan as one of the most creative and entertaining players the sport has seen in a long while, making him the ideal man to represent basketball's first realistic excursion into the world of computer simulations. As to the choice of basketball as the sport to which a new technology is applied first - non-fans will be surprised to learn that, as participation sports go, it's



The name Ron Barr won't be familiar to British sports fans, but in the states he's a well-known presenter. Here he hosts EASN (Electronic Arts Sports Network) in the run up to the big game.

Jordan In-Flight

PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts

PRICE: tba

TELEPHONE: 0753 549442

OUT: April

Blueprint

popularity is overshadowed by soccer alone.

It is the second half of the working title that gives away the origins of the technology that puts this product head and shoulders above any other sports simulation. EA has taken sophisticated techniques used to develop commercial flight simulations and applied them successfully to a 3D

"Over 1000 frames of animation are stored within the program code..."

representation of a basketball court, giving the player the visual freedom he or she might expect from the most recent flight simulations. Innumerable 'camera angles' are possible both during play and when setting up replays, so if you have a burning desire to view a slam shot from the point of view of

the ball, no problem, or if you'd prefer a more conventional view from the bench, you can set it up in seconds.

The appeal of *Jordan In-Flight* doesn't end there by a long shot. The production team have also borrowed a sophisticated video technique from the world of commercial television and film. The technique called chroma-key involves filming people or objects against a blue background, so that, at a post-production stage, the blue screen can be filtered out and the remaining image superimposed against another background. The resulting effect will be familiar to moviegoers who are used to seeing the likes of Christopher Reeves flying over Manhattan in *Superman* or Angela Lansbury floating through a cartoon sea in *Bedknobs and Broomsticks*. These well-known special effects were achieved with chroma-key, but the EA team has taken the technique one stage further and digitised images of Jordan and other San Francisco and Chicago based college stars performing their moves, then have integrated them with the artificially generated backgrounds in the game.

Combining video and computer technology hasn't been

simple. As game designer Mike Suarez explains, "the merging of professional video production and digital interactive entertainment requires that professionals from both industries learn a lot about each other's hardware and software as well as jargon. The most recurring difficulty is getting digitised video images grabbed cleanly from tape and displayed on a computer screen without

distortion. Since videotape is the source medium for television, its weaknesses are very apparent in the high-resolution world of colour computer screens. TV is just not as crisp and therefore more forgiving."

Over 1000 frames of animation are stored within the program code and each of these can be smoothly scaled and compressed proportionately in real-time. The end result is that the player does not play the game with crudely drawn stick or cartoon men, but has real players performing real moves before his or her eyes. It's

truly mesmerising guiding a realistic, miniature version of Michael Jordan down the length of the court and then watching him spin around beneath the basket to perform his classic reverse lay-up. Excuse me a second, I think I'll just watch that one again from beneath the basket - Go for it Michael! ☑

(Top) This early development shows some of the difficulty of getting high grade images from standard broadcast quality tape. In the second image you can see how much cleaner the images are now that anti-aliasing and other techniques have been applied.

(Bottom) Michael's participation in the production process has gone beyond the filming. He has also acted as consultant, giving detailed estimates of his shooting percentages from the different areas of the court and providing classic 3-on-3 plays for inclusion, as well as general information on how the computer-controlled players should ideally behave in different situations.

(Below) Michael Jordan struts his stuff for the camera. Once this image has been captured on video, the background will be dropped out and the remaining image digitised for inclusion in the game.



Flight to the Future

Jordan In-Flight certainly won't be the last we see of this technology. There are immediate plans to create simulations of other sports as well as adventure games. But perhaps the most exciting possibilities, as seen by the EA team, are in Virtual Reality. Mike Suarez believes that "the first round of mass market consumer Virtual Reality products will have to integrate video derived images into the three dimensional world seamlessly. Until then, existing multi-player games, as well as desktop 3D adventures, war simulations and vehicle simulators of all kinds will increasingly use video derived animations and scale them in real-time for greater graphic impact." Certainly, if *Jordan In-Flight* is anything to go by, there are exciting things to come.



The new face of horror.

Plunge into a chilling maze of terror where vampires, werewolves and zombies prowl the dead of night. Confront Kairn, whose lethal powers flow from the blood of his murdered family. Will you emerge as the final victor? Or become his final victim? Your fate will be sealed within the Veil of Darkness.

- ✿ Unravel terrifying riddles. Fulfill bone-chilling quests. Clash in a deadly face-off with the vampire Kairn.
- ✿ Live the horror with heart-stopping graphics and animation, stunning cinematic sequences, haunting music, and blood-curdling sound effects.
- ✿ Fight for your life in one of three combat levels. Use the right weapon to destroy each ghoul, werewolf, and zombie. Or die.
- ✿ Meet a host of spectral characters whose dark secrets reveal more of the mystery.
- ✿ Sink deep into this gothic nightmare with state-of-the-art game play. Immerse yourself with the easy-to-use Real Time Visual point-and-click interface.
- ✿ Record every step you take with line-of-sight auto-mapping and print-out feature.

Veil of Darkness

U.S. GOLD Ltd., Units 2/3 Holford Way Holford Birmingham B67AX Tel: 021 625 3366.



Screen shots shown are IBM 256 Colour VGA displays and are intended to be illustrative of the gameplay and not the screen graphics, which may vary considerably between formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computer's specifications.

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It looks like a review but in fact it's a set of instructions. Come with us on a guide to how our reviewing system works. Or doesn't as the case may be.



THE SCORE

All games receive an overall mark out of 100. So by definition that's a percentage but if you want to call it "out of a hundred" then you go ahead and call it "Out of a hundred". You can even call it Basil if you like.

As a rough guide to interpreting the scores here's the guidelines we give to reviewers. (Not that they ever read them mind you. It can be quite heartbreaking at times...)

90+ (PC Zone Classic) Highly original idea or an exceptional, near 'definitive' version of an old idea. Flawless in all departments and crammed to overflowing with long-term playability. Alternatively the software company took the reviewer to Paris for the weekend.

80-89 (PC Zone Recommended)

Extremely well executed strong in all/all but one department. High degree of originality.

70-79 Strong idea, well executed. Not necessarily very original. However weaknesses do not seriously impair playability and it has a reasonably long life.
60-69 Games falling into the "If you like this style of game you'll like this if not you won't" category. Plus games strong on idea but weak on presentation or vice versa.

50-59 Seen it all before, take it or leave it. Nothing special to recommend it but not abysmal either.

40-49 Dodgy. Still playable but probably only the once.

30-39 Seriously weak in idea and execution. Not good.

20-29 The game is hopeless or the software company forgot the £50 cash bribe.

10-19 Bin jobs

0-9 It didn't work. It crashed the PC and got jammed in the disk drive.

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N

This is the review team. Ugly looking bunch aren't they? Surely they can't be that bad in real life? Unfortunately they can.



Paul Lakin

THIS JOURNALISM lark is just a hobby for Paul. The faded aristocrat is simply biding his time while attempting to further his claim to be seated upon the throne of Bulgaria. The only obstacle is that he can't pronounce the Bulgarian phrase for "I am your King".



Laurence Scottford

AS WELL AS highly developed gamesplaying skills Laurence is also a budding thespian (No dear, we said thespian) whose startlingly inspired performance as the cows' back legs in this years Jack And The Beanstalk provoked The Guardian to describe his contribution as "definitive".



Mark Burgess

RESIDENT TECHNICAL wizard Mark is currently working on plans to beat NASA in the race to Mars. Tragically after running complex experiments in virtual reality a national elastic band shortage has unfortunately severely jeopardised the launch date.



Reviews

PC ZONE score

A game of truly monumental averageness with very little character.

50

Price: £35.99 Out: Now
Published: Dennis
Telephone: 071 631 1433

THE SPECS

Is there anything worse than buying a game only to find it's not compatible with your machine? Well yes there are plenty of things worse but we can't do anything about them. With this technical box we can at least make sure you know what memory, graphic and sound support you will need (or can use) with each game.

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 565K
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: 20MHz
Installation: Essential

IN PERSPECTIVE

Often all that a review is saying is that a game is as good as that one but not quite as good as the other one. 'In Perspective' attempts to illustrate this visually by rating the game in terms of similar examples. The 'scores' given in this graph are relative to each other i.e. all examples might score highly in their own right but not against each other. Well it seemed a good idea in the pub last night. Let us know what you think.

A Better Game



The Game Being Reviewed



A Worse Game



What's On Our Hard Disk?

Some games get installed, reviewed and then deleted. Others hang around a lot longer. This (in no particular order) is what's currently nestling on our hard drive. Not necessarily the best games around, but the ones we keep coming back to.

1. Ultima Underworld 2
2. Stunt Island
3. Star Control 2
4. Catacomb Abyss
5. Dune 2



Duncan MacDonald

HERE IS NO way Duncan could be described as a technical wizard. He's not scared of his PC - he's terrified of it. His PC taunts him, teases him and occasionally uses physical violence on him. Currently he is walking round with a black eye after an argument about re-formatting.



David McCandless

THOSE WHO'VE followed the career of Britain's most dangerous games reviewer will be relieved to learn that age has brought refinement. Macca is currently indulging in music. His latest composition "Symphony For Strings, Keyboard and Kalashnikov" is to be premiered in the Spring.



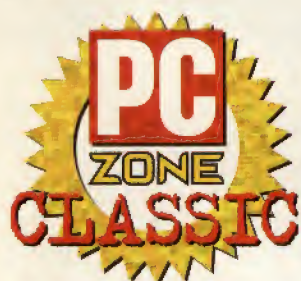
Patrick McCarthy

THERE ARE TWO loves in Patrick's life. One is his hand crafted (in teak) 386 PC the other is his collection of carnivorous pets. The prize of his collection is a small Siberian wolf cub called Wilf. He also had a rather exotic Indian panther, until Wilf ate it.



Andy Butcher

IS THERE ANYONE more attached to RPG games than young Andy? He lives RPG games and simply plays life for relaxation between games. Separate him from a keyboard or a point and click interface and he ceases to function (or as they say in RPG land "loses all his manna points").



ULTIMA UNDERWORLD II

Hooray! Hooray!
The wait is over!
It's here! It's here!
Hooray! Er, (cough,
cough). I mean,
now hear this! The
time of tarrying
hath passeth and
verily I, **David**
McCandless,
sayeth unto you
that ye may now
playeth
Underwulde The
Second. For it is
holy. And it is
brilliant like a
star. And it is fab...

1 GARGOYLE

The Gargoyle's eyes are essential in combat. They flash red, yellow or green depending on how many body parts you've hacked off your enemy.

2 YOU

This is you, dressed to kill as usual. Holes and dents appear as your armour and weapons are damaged.

3 WEAPON HAND

The right-hand circle is your main fighting hand. Click on this and the weapon appears in the 'action window'. Sorry, we were almost 'handist' there. For the sad 0.01% of the population who are left-handed, the opposite circle may be selected as a weapon hand at the start of the game.

4 BLUE BOTTLE

Current 'mana'. Excessive spell-casting drains it. Excessive sleep tops it up.

5 RED BOTTLE

Vitality points. Full – you're fit and ready. Empty – you're stiff and beginning to mould. Green – you're poisoned.

6 THE ICONS

For wusses who can't quite handle the *Underworld* 'system', these are some shortcut icons.

7 TEXT WINDOW

On this ragged scroll many great deeds are written. Well, if you're me they are. If you are a 'normal' adventurer, your scrolling bar probably reads: "You see Lord British's hand. You kiss his hand. You love his hand. It is the hand you've been dreaming of..."

8 RUNE SHELF

The runic name of a prepared spell appears here. Click to cast. Current spell is 'Smite Undead' (just in case any of the cast of *Eldorado* should happen along).

9 COMPASS

This little compass doubles as a direction pointer and a power-meter. Flashing green means your blow has reached 'ninja' level.

10 SPELL SHELF

Current spells in operation, with a maximum of three.



ERWORLD II

LABYRINTH OF WORLDS

INTO CHARACTER

Before all the adventuring can begin however, you must build a character. Firstly you choose your type. You know the drill: Mages, Rangers, Bards, Druids and Fighters. My favourite choice are Druids who 'dig' Nature, eat bio-yogurt and learn their combat skills from fighting the 'Blue Monsters' at Stonehenge every year. Then, after choosing your skills from an immense list (covering acrobatics and swimming to charisma and french kissing,) you end up looking something like this:



Cells are cast with Runes which are obtained, on the whole, by mugging fellow mages at sword point. Spells range from the tame Create Food and Armour) to the apocalyptic (Shockwave and Firestorm)



T

ANKARD OF ALE OR BOK SIRE?" was all you used to get from women in Role Playing Games. That and "Help! Help! I'm crap, I'm wearing a white dress and I need to be rescued!". Of course, that was the 'old days', when men

were men and women were buxom serving wenches with low-cut dresses. But nowadays, in the nineties, Britannia, fabled realm and setting of the *Ultima* Octology, has ceased to be the macho WASP homeland we all loved and cherished. Instead, it's a right-on ecological cum social cum feminist disaster area.

As in the real Britain, the Royal house is in turmoil. The servants are in revolt. The women want equal rights – a full RPG referendum, a franchise bill, and less of the low-necked corsets which push their bosoms out. Lord British, once compassionate and regal, is now distracted and bearded. The water's running out, the plants are dying, and they're running out of Mana Boost Potion (or whatever they call 'coffee' in RPG land).

In the old days, of *Ultimas* I to VII these problems would have been solved very quickly with the key phrases: hanging, drawing and quartering. But today, 1993, it's conscience, compromise and climb-down.

SCENARIO

You, Avatar, have returned to Britannia for a good old knees up with all your old adventuring chums, managing to make it to bed in the early hours, at least six units over the legal horse-riding limit. You wake up the next morning to a castle in chaos. The Guardian has cast a huge spell, encasing the entire castle in blackrock, an indestructible mineral. The only chance of escape is to explore the castle's underground sewers for a way out. Although you're obviously not the first with your hand up for a knee-high holiday in sewage, it is suspected that there may be an escape route below.

FREEDOM

The key word for *Underworld II* is 'freedom'. Nothing can completely prepare you for the freedom the game gives you (except *Underworld I* of course). It's about as close to Virtual Reality as you are ever likely to get from your mouse driver.

Move the mouse pointer to the top of the action screen, hit the left button – and you're galloping forward; half-way up and it's an easy canter. Left or right with the mouse and you'll rotate. Down left or right and you'll whip round. Full at the bottom and you'll be moonwalking. Right button while running and you leap forward.

When you turn, the world turns with you. Pixel by pixel. You can look up at the ceiling, or down at your shoes. You can shuffle along a wall and dart out of corner. You can sprint down tiny corridors or leap from parapets. You can fall down several screens into a lava

pit or you can get caught in water currents, and be swept over a waterfall. You can wear a dress and call your character Jemima. You can stab spiders, hack humans, bash bugs, or alliterate like an arsehole. You can cast spells. Shoot arrows. Throw daggers. Break down doors. Smash open chests. Pick locks. You can run out of torches and be plunged into monster-infested darkness. You can be teleported off the map and into an 'ethereal void'. You can be poisoned, healed or cursed. You can barter for objects or just 'stab and run'. You can drown or be burnt alive by a lava flow. You can be killed in a million different ways or you can solve each puzzle in at least six.

BUM-LICKY

I know all this sounds impressively bum-licky, but that's because there really is nothing you can do with

this game except sit there, dribble slightly, and say "blimey" every eight to ten minutes. The graphics are stunning. On a 486, the dungeons can move like a film. The wall textures vary between red brick and granite to ice and swirl multi-coloured 'alternate dimension' style walls.

Add a soundcard and you'll have to throw the fabled word 'atmosphere' in. You'll hear your footsteps echoing, the snow crunching under your feet, the large (size 14D) footsteps of an approaching beast, the swishing swashbuckle of your sword, the clink as you miss your target and hit the wall instead, a greasy schlop as you finally manage to hit your foe, and then the "oof" as it, hours later, expires in an explosion of blood.

ATMOSPHERE

'Atmosphere' is what RPGs crave to create. Without it, they're crap. *Underworld II* does it effortlessly. But, not it has to be said, as well as the original. *Underworld II*, with its twenty or more levels, takes a lot longer to get going than *The Stygian Abyss* and there's a lot of empty space between 'excitement points'.

Gone are the hippy-trippy mushrooms, the mellow ankhs and mantras, the goblins with lisps, the dwarves with attitudes, the flute-playing ghouls. In *Underworld II* you have eco-disaster for Britannia, racist goblins who make a big deal out of you being hummie, and overall, a bit of a po-faced follow up. There's not a joke in sight.

This is because *Underworld II* is more in tune with the rest of the *Ultima* titles, having a darker plot which updates all the storylines of the previous games with the 3D system. Most people, however, are blessedly ignorant of the other *Ultima* games. Anyone who knows the entire history of Britannia is to be found at the bottom of the evolutionary ladder, alongside train spotters and people who use the word 'quintessential'.

But you can only be picky about a quintessential product like *Underworld II*. It's huge, it's state of the art, and it's at least 72 hours worth of continuous play.

"Anyone who knows the entire history of Britannia is to be found at the bottom of the evolutionary ladder, alongside train spotters and people who use the word 'quintessential'."

LEVEL 1

THE START

Lol I, Avatar, hath teleported bravely to another dimension. Oh man, I hath teleported into a dead end. But lo! Verily, 'tis a secret door. Ah, they do not pronounce me 'Avatar The Cunning' for naught!

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AVATAR

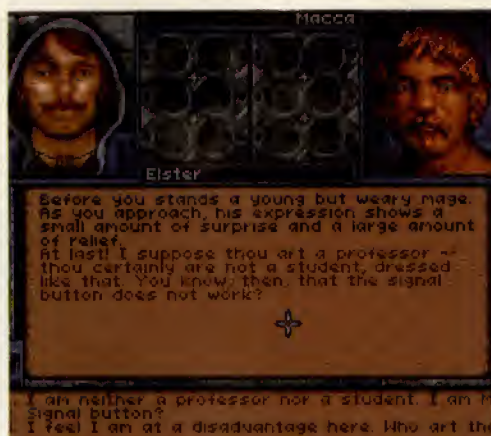
IN PERSPECTIVE

3 D 'Virtual Reality' programming is becoming increasingly 'in vogue'. But the Ultimas still lead the field in technology and atmosphere.

Legends Of Valour

The Stygian Abyss

Ultima Underworld II



Hark! 'Tis Timothy of Dalton. I doth know that James Bond wert hardly a great step in his acting career, yet what is he doing in Septimus' Mages School? What do you mean I look like a student?



Oh, 'tis a test for mages. He refused to take it. Lord, if James Bond couldn't do it, what chance have I? Ah, But I am Avatar, Lord Of The Jungle, King Of All I Survey, Top Cat, The Main Man. Injury is likely. Death is probable. Hah! The Avatar cries in the face of injury and makes mewling sounds in the shadow of Death.

FIRST PROBLEM



First problem. There art three portcullises. All art locked. How canst they be opened? Ah, I see, with pressure pads. A choice dump of useless items on each of the three 'pads' will be successful.



The Left room. What's this - a trap? Mine legs doth stiffen and an infinite amount of arrows come out of the wall. Time for a reload I think.



The Right room. Behold a wall. But when is a wall not a wall? When 'tis a portal to the next level! Hah-hah (Avatar 'joke' - Ed)

LEVEL 2



Right, I hath left the first level behind. God's blood! Now 'tis ice and "non local causality". So slipping and sliding all over the shop, trying to find out which button does what, is the plan.



Goodies! A broadsword, some bones, a brown potion of speed (not the illegal kind), and a wand of paralysis. Lovely.

LATER...



Now thee mayest call me 'Avatar the Intelligent'. I have solved the puzzle thus: button + locked door + "non local causality" = open door.



The clue here is "synchronisation". There's lava (which hurts). Moving floors (which hurt). And arrows flying all over (they hurt too). Maybe that speed potion will help me here.

LEVEL 3



LATER STILL...



"Psychokinesis and terraforming," sayeth the wall. "Pah! 'Tis easiest enough for a simpleton," replyeth Avatar. There is a wand of telekinesis, lava, some high switches, and an exit on high upon yonder ceiling. A bit of psychic probing around the ceiling is needed here.

LEVEL 4



The next phase is "Spatial Reasoning". It mayeth look easy on the map, but wert it such a cinch down here. You have to kill most of the wildlife of North America before you get through this section.



LEVEL 5



MUCH LATER...

Section five is "Effects and constraints". There are a lot of doors, a lot of levers, a lot of hidden pressure pads, and you're given a pole. As the working class sayeth, "Nuff said".



Most monsters are easily classifiable (rats, bats and spiders). But travel wide into the ethereal dimension and you might come across the 'purple bug-eyed flesh monsters with a bumpy tongue'.

LEVEL 6



There art a plethora of tunnels here, coupled with a plethora of teleports. Transport mine body and soul to another section of this ungodly puzzle.

ABOUT THREE DAYS LATER...

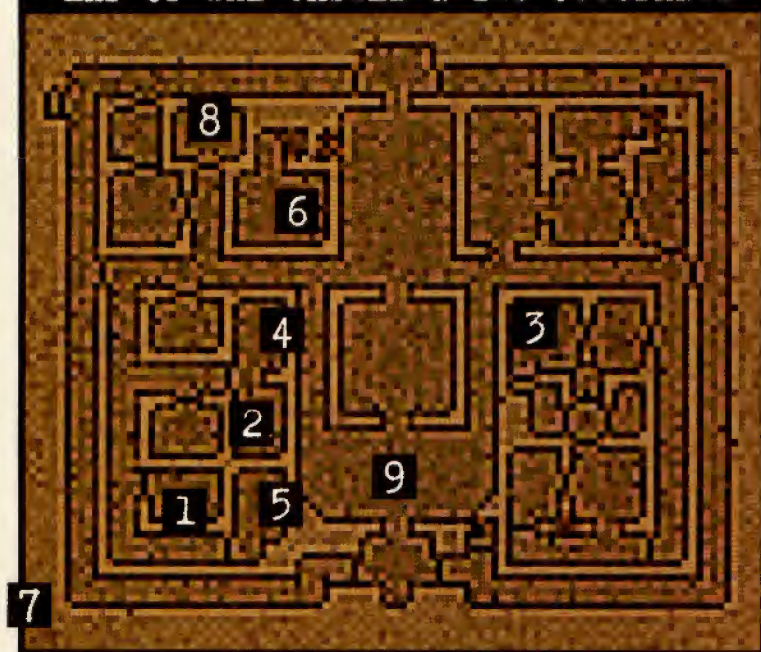


Praise God - I have finished the fiendish test. Tell me I received less than an A and I shall cut thy ear lobes off with mine - er, hello? Is anybody there? Astaroth's Beard! Everyone is dead!



Help! I'm trapped in the ethereal void, and I don't like it. Help! Anyone?

MAP OF THE CASTLE & ITS OCCUPANTS



SOAP OPERA

One of the sub plots in *Underworld II* is the castle's on-going soap opera. While you're bouncing around other dimensions, rescuing damsels etc., the characters caught in the keep are having their own little dramas. There's a traitor in their midst, so it's up to you to cast a 'Be Poirot' spell and ask the question: "Where wurr you on ze naight of ze blackrock?"

Communication is essential if you feel like surviving for long. Most packs of monsters have a 'hive mentality'. For instance, flippant inform one skeleton that he is a bit skinny and all seventy skeletons attack you.

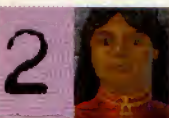


Aside from telling you exactly where you are, maps are easily labelled with informative descriptions of previous encounters.



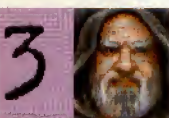
1 PATTERSON

My nominee for 'Traitor Of The Month'. He's fat, for a start. Then balding. Then previously a member of The Fellowship – but he's now reformed (so he says). Was also adulterous but you showed him the error of his ways. **Special Skills:** Charisma and Fat Blotchy Thighs.



2 LADY TORY

Tall. Striking. Effervescent. Kind. Dead. Unfortunately, she's the first to be stabbed by the traitor, so no love interest there. She's probably not the traitor either. **Special Skills:** Empathy and Being Stabbed By The Traitor.



3 NYSTUL

The most well regarded scholar in Britannia. Has a huge intellect but, like most geniuses, is emotionally retarded. Still laughs at the word 'boobs' and likes to talk about the arcane arts. Too respected to be The Traitor. But then so was Lord Haw-haw (hah-hah). **Special Skills:** Mana, Casting and Jokes About Willies.



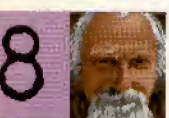
4 JULIA

The famous blonde thief. She wants to go adventuring and monster slaying but is trapped in the castle by her responsibilities. Very stropky and temperamental, or as we could've said in the old days, pre-menstrual. **Special Skills:** Lock Picks and Cutting Up Her Husband's Shirts With A Bread Knife.



5 NELSON

Not the short feisty naval leader of yore, but the short feisty Lore Expert on 'holiday' in the keep, archiving its great store of literature. Useful for info on the arcane arts. But he's a stranger – where does he come from? Why is he here? **Special Skills:** Lore and Crushing The Frenchies At Trafalgar.



6 LORD BRITISH

An inhabitant of our world, who spends most of his life in the fantasy land (or cloud-cuckoo land, some might say). A great healer and philosopher-king (i.e. ponce-king), but nevertheless bearded and not quite free from the free-love drugs influence of the sixties. **Special Skills:** Healing and Those Rotating Psychedelic PostCards.

7 THE GUARDIAN

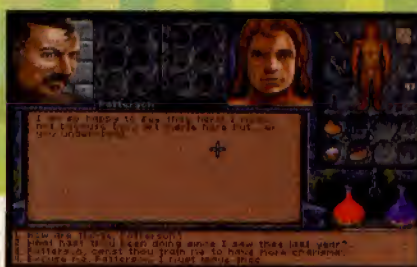
'Chinny' to his friends, the Guardian projects his insecurity about his chin onto the universe by trying to dominate every plane of existence, including Britannia. The logic being that if he rules over everybody, nobody will dare make 'Jimmy Hill/Bruce Forsythe' jokes anymore. He previously forged The Fellowship (a society pretending to spread goodness through the land, but instead a front for evil doings). Many of the dramatic personae are reformed Fellowship members. But is that reformed or reformed (wink)? **Special Skills:** Giving You Bad Dreams.

8 IOLE & SIR DUPRE

Two old chums of yours who have appeared in the previous *Ultima* games. They'd rather take a suck on Castle Britannia's sewers than betray you. But then they'd rather both take a suck on an ale bottle than anything. **Special Skills:** Weapons and Saying "What Ho Avatar!"

9 MIRANDA

Lord British's right hand man, er woman. You report to directly to her when you discover something. She's deadly efficient and campaigns for greater equality for women and eco-awareness for all. **Special Skills:** Anti-Patriarchy Potions. ☑



PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K RAM + 656K expanded memory

Minimum Processor: 386 SX or higher

Minimum Speed: 16MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 11.5Mb free

Minimum Graphics: VGA with at least 256K of video RAM

Sound Cards: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster, Sound Blaster Pro, Roland MT-32 or LAPC-1.

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

PC ZONE score

Just go out now
and buy it, okay.

94

Price: £39.99 **Out:** Now
Published: Electronic Arts/Origin
Telephone: (0753) 549442

SO FIGHT

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MICROPROSETM
SIMULATION • SOFTWARE

Transarctica



"It's a chance to indulge your childhood fantasies" we told Paul Lakin who looked suitably excited "About being a train driver" we added, to his obvious disappointment.



WHY OH WHY, I remarked to Anne Robinson the other night, do people trust scientists? Whenever the world is about to explode or collide with a plague ridden asteroid it's the scientists that are called upon to rescue us. Scientists grow up reading Tolkein, listening to Genesis and playing complex RPG games. Trusting people like this to save the world can only end in tears.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating so get a mouthful of earth post 2022. In a, surely somewhat rash, attempt to reverse the effects of global warming Professor John Merrick and a team of like-minded boffins explode thermo nuclear devices simultaneously at both poles. This experiment is known as 'Operation Blind' although 'Operation Bloody Stupid' would have been a better name. Due to a tiny miscalculation the world is plunged into a massive nuclear winter. Golly they must have felt silly.

A few hundred years later civilisation continues in small communities and, more usually, huge trains which traverse the frozen wastes trading, fighting and grumbling about the weather. The rail system is controlled by the all powerful and no doubt recently privatized Vikings Union, who have too much money invested in snow ploughs and anti freeze to contemplate a return to a sunnier way of life. What would their shareholders say?

You of course, as a free thinking software purchaser, hold no truck with such selfish aims. You have read about the sun and you're interested (particularly by this talk of naked ladies on page 3). You have become what is known as an Ambivalent, someone who thinks snow is overrated and sun glasses are really cool. As captain of the Transarctica, a large armoured train, you set out to discover more about the sun, Operation Blind and the sequel: Operation Sun. Your aim is nothing less than restoring warmth to the world. Rather like Cliff Richard.

Trading Places

At heart Transarctica is a strategy game and the core of the strategy is trading. You need to trade to get more Lignite and Anthracite both of which fuel the train. Lignite also has the advantage of being used as currency, the unit of which is the Bak (100kg of lignite) Trading is done in cities which supply anything from food and consumer

durables to carriages for the train, slaves and soldiers. It's also in the cities that you'll occasionally come across rumours concerning Operations Blind and Sun.

Since different cities buy and sell goods for different amounts there's the chance of a quick profit for the sharp operator - or stinking parasitic middleman.

Time For Action

War, it is often remarked, involves long periods of boredom interspersed with moments of intense excitement. (No one ever mentions the moments of sheer naked terror). In Transarctica combat involves long periods of boredom interspersed with periods of intense tedium.

The combat takes place when you run up against trains of the Viking Union. The two trains face each other across a bleak no-mans land. Battles are fought using gun carriages to blast away at each other, and more importantly soldiers who can climb onto the enemy's train and lay bombs. Obviously the enemy have soldiers on the roof of their trains to stop you which leads to plenty of traintop scraps. It reads well but you shouldn't believe everything you read.

The action is so slow. Soldiers, even when carried by mammoths, move in slow jerks. In fact they are slow jerks. A soldier's guarding a carriage? Simply get off the train, go round the carriage on the ground and get back on again. These boys' intelligence is so artificial it doesn't exist.

For the rest of the action you simply move your train up and down a small piece of track while firing. The combat option can be turned off. I strongly recommend you do this.

Train In Vain

The more I write about Transarctica the more I start liking it again. There seem to be so many elements to it and it's based on a good scenario. However I know that the moment I start playing it I'll go into a tedium induced trance. Let's just see shall we. (Exit reviewer to play game once more) Yup I was right.

The game falls down because of its pace or lack of it. Although there's variety of incident in most of it you're passive, simply admiring the graphics and reading the information. Attacks by anything other than trains are simply noted by a graphic screen and information on your losses. Collapsed bridges are simply noted, again by a graphic. The train stops automatically.

Am I being a bit too arcadey here? Perhaps the game would appeal to out and out strategy buffs. But then why put in the dreadful combat arcade sequence, why make you drive the train, which can be quite fiddly/irritating. Why not go the whole hog and make it board game style. It might have been a better game. Besides I don't think there is enough strategy here. Essentially all you're doing is going around a rail map buying and selling goods and making sure your fuel reserves are intact.

I never thought the day would come when I wouldn't enjoy attacking a train with woolly mammoths. I was wrong. Yet another childhood illusion bites the dust. ☒

Visit Taoudeni and indulge your acquisitive instincts as you stock up on mammoth dung, wolf meat and other essentials.



Part of the Government's privatisation programme. Buy your very own carriage for use on your newly franchised local line.



"You've hunted woolly Mammoths/But looked for them in vain/Then you see eight of the beggars/Charging at your train." J Keats jnr.





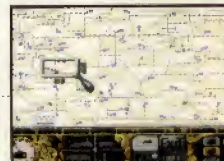
The "Not as exciting as it might be" combat sequence. In this thrilling screen the two trains eye each other across the snow while a mammoth and a squad of infantry attack the enemy. Slowly. Very slowly.

WHAT A CARRIAGE ON

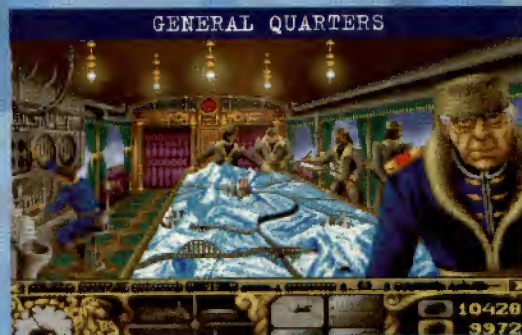


TRAIN IN VAIN

- 1** Large Scale Map; The ideal setting to indulge your Ivor The Engine fantasies by making choof choof noises. You can also change the points which is less fun but of more practical value.
- 2** The Train; By highlighting a carriage you can check its type and condition.
- 3** Time compression; get out of real time and speed things up. You'll be doing this quite a lot.
- 4** Carriages; Access to the four key carriages of your train. (See What A Carriage On)
- 5** Maps; Large or small scale depending on your needs
- 6** Change Direction; Why go forwards when you can go backwards. Throw the switch for sudden changes of direction.
- 7** Brake; Stops the train. Crazy but true.
- 8** Counter; Shows levels of (from the top) Lignite, Anthracite and speed. (As in your kph, not how laden you are with illicit substances)



Map of the full playing area. Difficult to caption amusingly.



PC ZONE score

Reads a lot better than it plays. Very disappointing.

55

Price: £39.99 Out: Now
Published: Silmarils
Telephone: c/o Daze 071 490 2944

You can access four locations on the train, each with its own special features (drinks cabinet, complete set of Hermans Hermits albums, unrivalled collection of Swedish pornography – that sort of thing) and a message tube from where you hear of new Lignite mines and the like.

The Engine: From here you can adjust the train's speed, direction and lob some more fuel into the firebox. Best of all you can sound the whistle.

General Quarters: The headquarters, the nerve centre, the operational hub... all that sort of stuff. This is where you access the map, send out spies (who can act as observers and saboteurs) and line inspection cars. The guy on the right also has a good line in knock knock jokes.

Private Wagon: The guy on the left is your secretary, which is a bit of a blow. However he does keep the inventory. See that revolver on the table? That's for committing suicide that is. (Oh and quitting the game.)

Missile Launcher: Why shoot at someone when you can blast them into orbit with a whopping great ICBM. You don't get one of these to start with, you have to buy it. But boy is it worth the money.



PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 560K
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: 15MHz
Installation: Optional
Minimum Hard Disk: 20Mb
Minimum Graphics: EGA and above
Sound Cards: Bleeper, Ad-Lib and Sound Blaster.
Controls: Keyboard, mouse and joystick.

IN PERSPECTIVE

Breach 2, Laser Squad, Buck Rogers and Ultima VI all have various elements in common with Shadowlands. Don't forget that these are only comparative scores...

Breach 2

Laser Squad

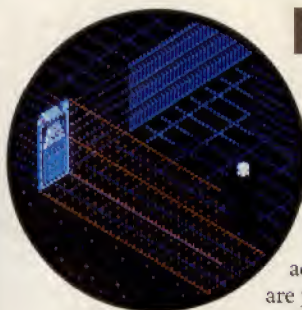
Buck Rogers

Ultima VI

Shadowlands

THE GOOD BITS

Photoscape™ lighting



Potoscape™ is a system first seen in Shadowlands, the precursor to Shadowlands, and is used to deal with the lighting in the game. The majority of the base is in darkness: Each of the mercs wears a hostile environment suit (space suit), with lights set into the helmet (à la Alien), and flares can be found once inside the building. Photoscape™ deals admirably with using these light sources. The helmet lights are particularly effective – you can direct individuals to look around, and the cone of light moves

around, up and down corridors, scanning across walls – it's all very atmospheric.

Modular guns

The guns in the game come in two types: pistols and rifles. The pistols are self-contained. The rifles work slightly differently. They come in two parts, a stock and a barrel. The stock contains the power source and defines the type of shot fired (eg. laser, flame or bullets.) The barrel defines the power of the weapon (eg. cannon, auto or shot.) By combining the different stocks and barrels different weapons can be made, with varying ranges, power and rates of fire. It's a neat idea.



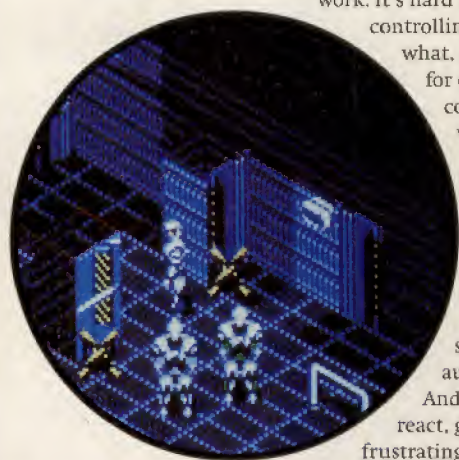
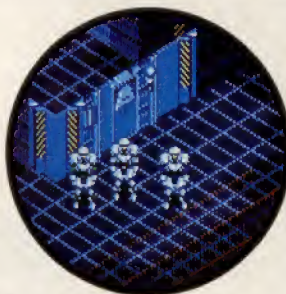
THE, ERM, NOT SO GOOD BITS

The control (?) system

Shadowlands is a real-time game. I'm not averse to real-time games, but they've got to have a control system that's simple, clear and quick to use. Shadowlands' isn't. To control a character you click on their face at the bottom of the screen, then on a part of the figure in the centre. Where you click defines what the character does – to open a normal door you click on the character you wish to use, then on the left arm of the figure, then on the panel that opens the door. While this seems fine as an idea, in practice it doesn't work. It's hard to see which merc you're

controlling, it's easy to get confused as to which limb does what, and it's very slow to use. It also means that you can't, for example, move and fire at the same time, and that controlling more than one character in a fight is virtually impossible.

The problem is compounded by the complete lack of computer intelligence. Your supposedly highly trained mercs are mind-numbingly stupid, and will quite happily shoot each other, walk into obvious holes in the ground and stand in the line of enemy fire without doing a thing. There's no way to control the team as a group except for movement. You can't, say, set someone on 'guard', so that he'll automatically fire at any enemy that comes in range. And things often happen so fast that you have no time to react, given the form of the control system. Basically it's frustrating, awkward and hard to use.



PC ZONE score

We asked a hundred people who'd played Shadowlands if they thought it was a damn good game with a smart control system. They said "Yes". Our survey said "Erk-err". Sorry, they lose.

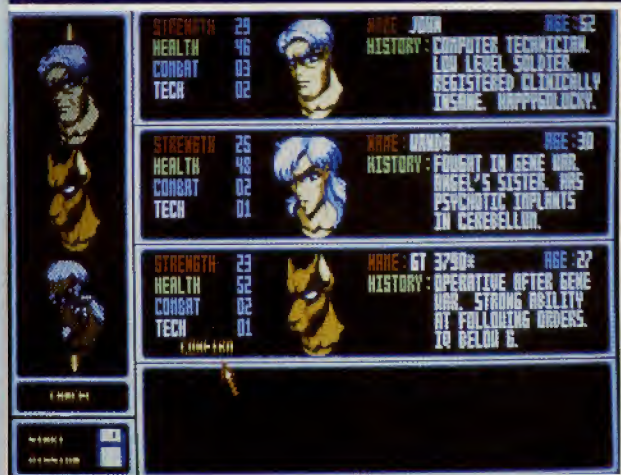
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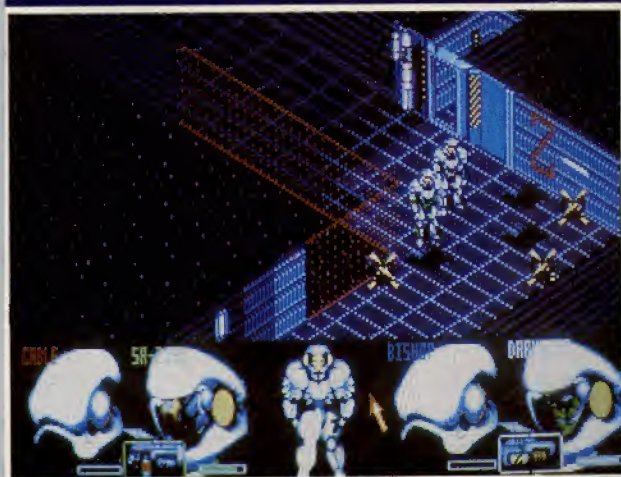
Price: £34.99 Out: Now
Published: Krisalis Software Ltd.
Telephone: 0709 372 290

Shadowworlds

After spending a week secretly trailing planets across the street **Andy Butcher** realised he'd completely misunderstood Shadowworlds. (*Weak. Very weak. Ed*)



The character selection screen, where you pick your trusty team of psychos. Pretty pictures, meaningless numbers, you know the kind of thing...



We're now in the game proper, and two of your group have just thrown themselves down these holes, in much the same manner as lemmings off a cliff.



Having decided to leave the other two downstairs, the mercs wonder where all the receptionists have gone, and what's on the telly today.

PEACE HAS COME TO the Federation. You know the kind of thing: trade agreements, free passage throughout all the known systems, a notable lack of huge fleets of starships blowing each other to bits, and absolutely no signs of any ex-farmers zooming around the place with overgrown laser scalpels screaming "You're not my father!" at every asthmatic in a black cloak they come across. In other words, the sun is shining in happy bunny land. Pretty boring, this peace stuff.

However, there is a small group of people with a more American view: while this peace thing is all well and good, it might not last forever, and although everyone's signed lots of treaties banning weapons research, a little bit wouldn't do anyone any harm. In another life they were most likely to be insurance salesmen. American insurance salesmen.

Don't panic

Unfortunately there seems to be a teensy little problem. Nothing really. It's just that the top secret and completely illegal weapons research facility has missed a few of its daily transmissions. Well, all of them for the last couple of months. A casual phone call to the Federation. "Oh, er, excuse me, but we seem to have lost contact with our top secret and completely illegal weapons research facility. We were wondering if you could send a ship to investigate, just before you come around and arrest us for breaking about 500 arms treaties. Thanks ever so much." is out of the question. So that only leaves the old standby: hire four of the meanest, hardest, toughest mercenaries around and send them to take a covert look.

Of course, don't tell them that the place is completely impregnable, and nothing at all could possibly have disturbed the place. Nothing that anybody knows about anyway. It'd only make them worry, after all.

Enter, stage left

So there you have it, the story behind *Shadowworlds*. Predictably enough you are in charge of the four mercs and their attempt to find out exactly what has happened to the base. The instructions describe it as a "science fiction role playing action strategy game". In reality it's a little bit of each. Just not always the best little bits. But there are a couple of things that stand out - see the panels on the left.

Walk across the stage with a purposeful air

The format of the game is very much along the lines of 'kill the baddie, solve the puzzle, find the key, open the next door, repeat'. Along the way you find various pieces of equipment and weaponry to distribute amongst the team, and, according to the inventory screen, get better at killing things, not that this seems to have any noticeable effect. There are also various appliances, such as weapon rechargers, food dispensers and a rather handy

'resurrection device' that brings back a team member from the dead by using the DNA pod that's left behind when someone suffers from a bout of severe kinetic energy poisoning. It's nothing new really, but it's not that bad.

Exit, stage right

Shadowworlds is yet another game that's a sad case of missed opportunity. Graphically it's adequate, with the odd nice animation. The sound is less impressive: a few spot effects that are okay but nothing special. But where it's really a let-down is in the playability stakes. The concept is fine, there are some really neat ideas, and in places it's very atmospheric. But it's all spoilt by an impractical control system and an apparent lack of thought by the game designers. This is the first PC game I'd recommend playing on a slow machine, just so you have a couple more seconds to realise what's happening. That way at least you'll know what killed you before you could do anything. Thumbs down.

"This is the first PC game I'd recommend playing on a slow machine, just so you have a couple more seconds to realise what's happening."

THE GAME SCREEN

1 HELMETS. In a super-human display of willpower I will fight off the temptation to use one of Patrick's jokes and just say that these are the heads of your trusty team of psychopaths. SA-2190 is the currently selected player, as denoted by the easy-to-see radio mike being in the down position. Darkstar is dead. Oh well.

2 SLIDEY BAR THINGS. The character's level of healthiness, vitality and chirpy optimism. Darkstar is still dead.

3 INVENTORY BOXES. Show what are in his/her/its hands. The easy-to-use tiny arrows supposedly allow you to scroll through everything being carried.

4 SPACE SUIT ICON This is the previously mentioned user-friendly control device. As you can see, each part is lovely and big, and easy to select in the frantic rush of combat.

5 TEAM MEMBER. Looking slightly lonely, and about to walk straight into...

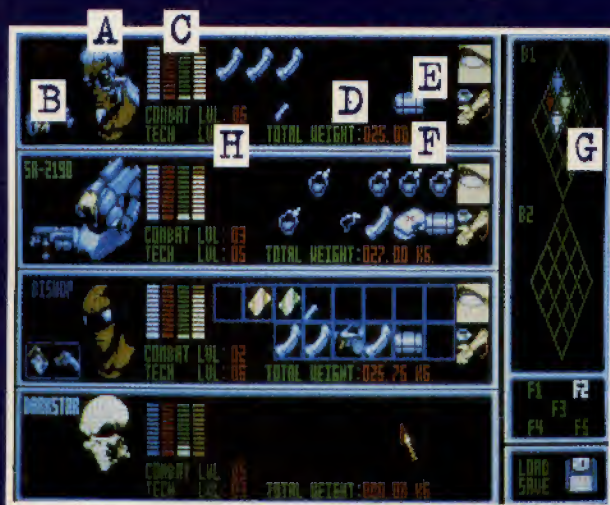
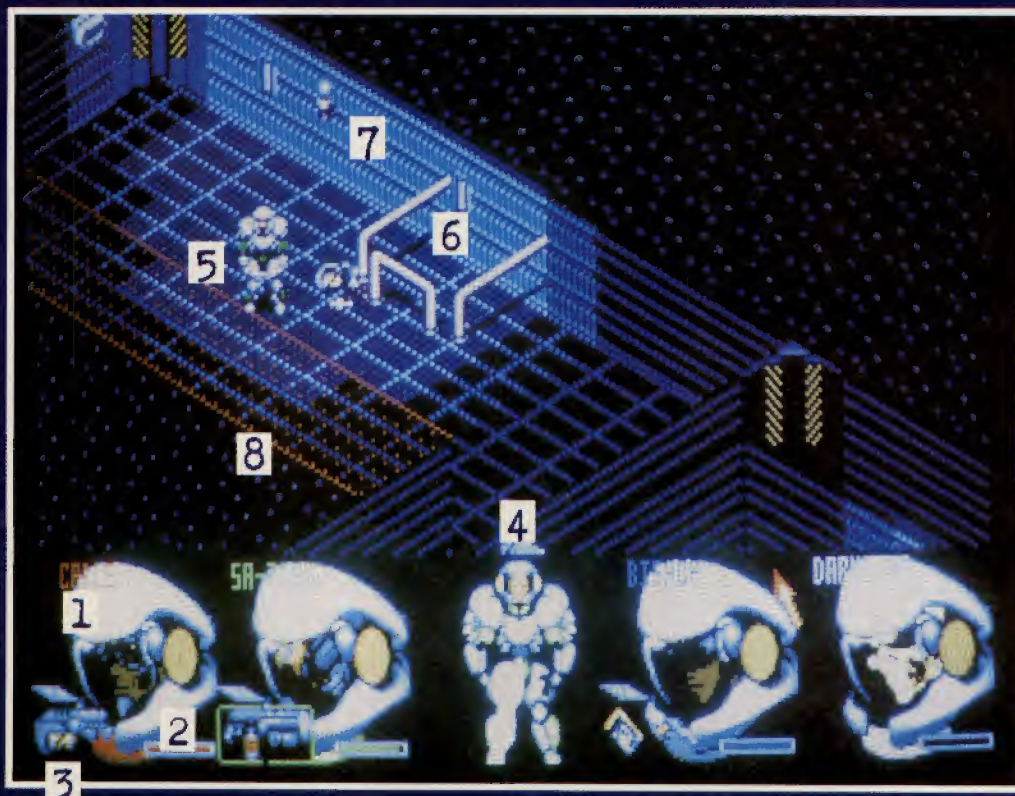
6 ELECTRIC BARS. These bars are electrified, and are just one of the many deadly things that the characters will happily walk into.

7 WALL. A wall.
(Hmm. Ed.)

8 FLOOR. The floor. (Yes, I think we get the picture now. Ed.)

ANNO SCREENS – DON'T YA LOVE 'EM?

Shadowworlds uses two screens – the main play screen and the inventory. In an effort to demonstrate the thoroughness with which we *PC Zone* reviewers break down a game, here they are in full. Wow.



THE INVENTORY SCREEN

A PRETTY PICCIES. These are the pretty piccies of your team. Any resemblance to person or persons living or dead would be a miracle.

B SMALL INVENTORY BOXES. Repeated from the main screen.

C SLIDEY BAR GRAPH THINGS. From left to right, these represent health (Darkstar is still dead), strength (never really made clear, probably related to the excessive number of huge guns being carried), fluids (how hungry they are), and finally, battery power (for the helmet lights).

D BIG INVENTORY BOXES. Everything currently carried by the character is shown in this space.

E ZOMBIE-LIKE EYE. Click here to tell the character to rest, regaining some health.

F INTRAVENOUS DRIP. This is used to feed your rabid band a constant diet of caffeine, in order to maintain the correct level of stress. Also used to feed them.

G WEIRD CHESSBOARDS. Used to decide what formation the team will walk in. Pretty useless.

H MEANINGLESS NUMBERS. Combat Level presumably affects shooting things, although just how is unclear. 'Tech Level' is a complete mystery, and seemingly unused – none of my characters ever increased in it. ☒

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K

Minimum Processor: 286

Minimum Speed: 12MHz

Installation: Optional

Minimum Hard Disk: 2.6Mb

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Sound Cards: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib, Roland LAPC-1

Controls: Mouse

DUNE II™

BATTLE FOR ARRAKIS

HE WHO CONTROLS THE SPICE... CONTROLS THE UNIVERSE.
AVAILABLE ON PC AND COMPATIBLES AND AMIGA SOON.

A WESTWOOD PRODUCTION FOR VIRGIN GAMES

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DESIGNED BY AARON E. POWELL, JOE BOSTIC.

PROGRAMMED BY JOE BOSTIC, SCOTT K. BOWEN.

TEXT BY DONNA J. BUNDY, RICK GUSH.

ART & ANIMATION BY AARON E. POWELL,

REN OLSEN, JUDITH PETERSON, ERIC SHULTS, ELIE ARABIAN.

MUSIC AND SOUND BY FRANK KLEPACKI, DWIGHT OKAHARA.

FOR VIRGIN GAMES UK:

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ARTWORK & CREATIVE CO-ORDINATION BY

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MANUFACTURING CO-ORDINATION

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VGA SCREEN SHOTS SHOWN

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STUDIOS

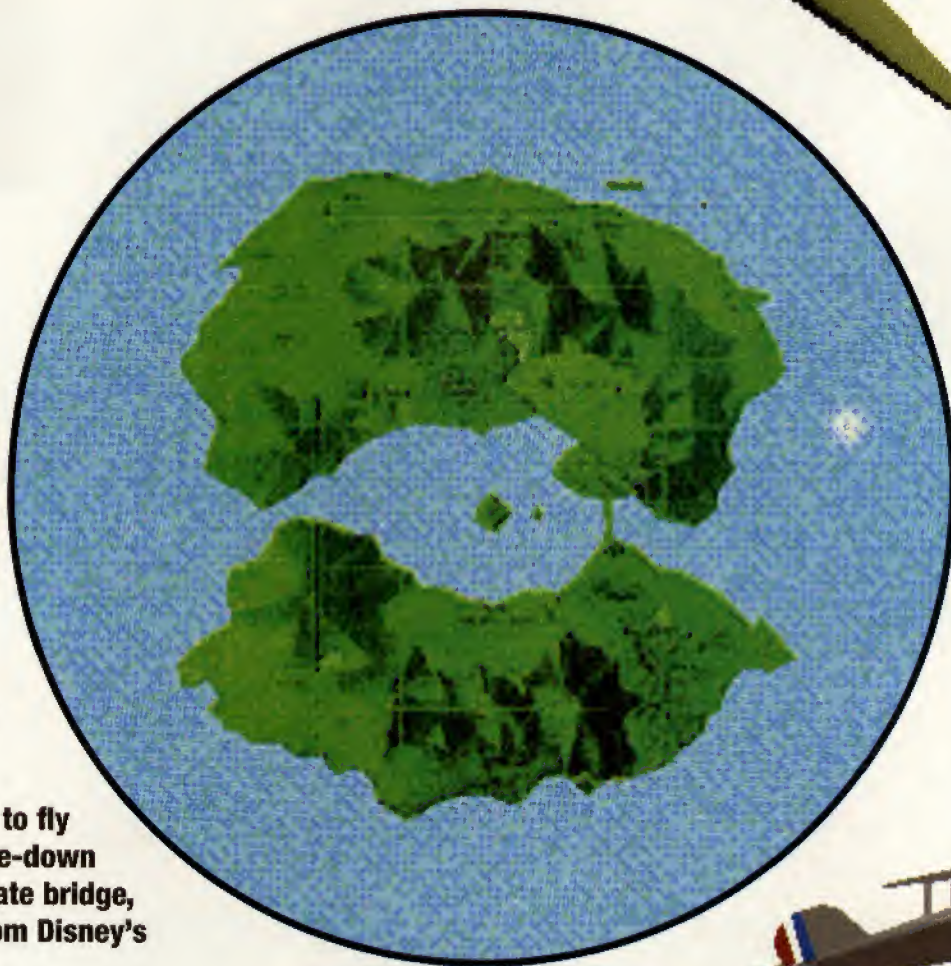


STUNT ISLAND AIRCRAFT

There are 48 aircraft featured in *Stunt Island*. This tiny sample shows just how diverse they are.



Laurence "Crazy Dog" Scottford finally realises his long-time ambition to fly a Boeing 747 upside-down under the Golden Gate bridge, with a little help from Disney's flight and film sim.



F-16C FALCON



B-2 STEALTH BOMBER



PAPAGLIDE



SPACE SHUTTLE



BRISTOL BULLDOG (MK IIA)



Stunt Island




WHAT'S THE FIRST thing you do when you get your brand, spanking new flight simulation loaded up for the first time? Fly the training mission? Read the 300 page manual from cover to cover? Nope, you head straight for the 'quick start' option, jump into several million pounds worth of military hardware and take it for a joyride, that's what.

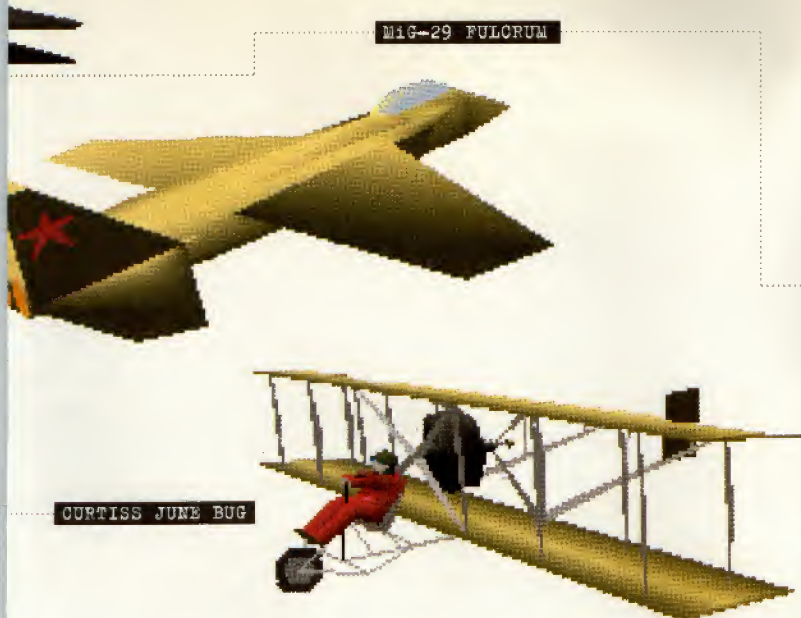
The nice thing about simulations is that you can go right ahead and land that F-15 in the middle of Manhattan without getting court-martialled. You want to eject while flying upside-down only 200 feet above a river, just for the hell of it? Go ahead. The last thing that a lot of games players want to do with a flight simulation is recreate Operation Desert Storm. Sure, accurately dropping a bomb down a four-foot wide ventilation tunnel in Baghdad has its appeal but it's not half as much fun as playing chicken in a Cessna with jumbos taking off from Los Angeles International airport.

Finally a publisher has realised that people want to have fun with a flight simulation and pull off stupid stunts. *Stunt Island* as Infogrames is at pains to point out, is not, strictly speaking a flight simulation, although flying aircraft is a fundamental part of the game. I almost hesitate to use the term game, since this product seems to fit more comfortably within that fuzzy genre which marketing people like to call software toys.

Fantasy Island

The premise behind *Stunt Island* is that the major Hollywood studios are finding it harder by the year to get permission to film the big, dangerous stunts that sell movies. While the general public is quite happy to watch exploding jeeps plummeting off cliffs in the latest *James Bond* movie, they're not so pleased when bits of rusty Landrover keep washing up on the beach and getting caught in their bikinis. The solution is to buy a large island in the Pacific, and stage all the really dangerous stunts there, out of harms way. 

MIG-29 FULCRUM



CURTISS JUNE BUG

LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!

Putting your own production together can be a time consuming process. It needs careful planning if things aren't to go horribly wrong.

STEP 1 Set up props

Having found a location and created a storyboard for your film, the first step is to set up your props. Props are divided into several types. Some are free moving, others move in a set direction, some simply turn to face the prop they're assigned to while the real nightmares are the Seek props that home in on other props. (We're talking missiles here). Finally attach props act like an extension of the prop they are attached to, so that wherever it goes, they go.

STEP 2 Set up cameras

The next stage is to put all the cameras in place. Each production can use up to eight cameras. Two film continuously and are automatically assigned to the stunt and spotter planes. The remaining six cameras can be switched off and on at will. You must decide how each camera is to behave. Is it to be fixed, or should it follow the plane or another prop? Should it zoom during shots or not?

STEP 3 Set up special events and prop animation

Here's where things can start getting a little complicated. If you want props to interact, or filming to proceed in several different ways depending on how the stunt goes, then you need to set up several conditions to be tested for. Conditions are written in a pseudo-code, so this section is specially for train spotters (or should that be plane spotters?). Actually it's nowhere near as complicated as it looks, so railway timetables and a packed lunch will not be obligatory.

STEP 4 Film the stunt

The moment can be put off no longer. It's time to climb into your plane and show the world what you're made of. They'll certainly see exactly what you're made of if you time this badly and smash into that roadblock.

STEP 5 Edit the film

Alright, you've managed to make a complete hash of the stunt but you don't necessarily have to go through the humiliation of another take. Simply install yourself in the editing suite with a large cup of black coffee and a new sense of purpose. Then cut and splice until you have something that looks, as your colleagues are fond of saying, "slicker than a couple of eels fighting in a barrel of snot."

STEP 6 Show the film

You've finally got something you're happy with, so it's time to toddle off to the preview theatre and impress your buddies with your sixty second long extravaganza. It may not have a multi-million dollar budget or a cast of thousands, but it comes straight from the heart, and by god, that's what Hollywood is all about... Excuse me a second, I have to go to the bathroom...

STEP 1



Score: 176018
Laps: 60491
Time: 316
Park at the hamburger stand



3.13. Monster Truck
Place: Go to: Ad:
Link: Del: Hide:
Global: Events:
Load: Save: New:
Fly Stunt: Exit

STEP 2



Score: 175981
Laps: 60726
Time: 90
Park at the hamburger stand



3.13. Camera#1
Place: Go to: Ad:
Link: Del: Hide:
Global: Events:
Load: Save: New:
Fly Stunt: Exit

STEP 3

00010X00010 (11) hits Sphere 00006r (12)
plane's speed < 2 mph
Flag #15 = 0
set Flag #0 to 1
award \$2400
play 'Great Flying, kid!' on chan 2, vol=4, pilot o
wait 3 seconds
fade to 8%
Finish - success
do nothing
do nothing

Score: 176018
Laps: 60491
Time: 316
Park at the hamburger stand

STEP 4



Score: 00 00 00
Laps: 00 00 00
Time: 00 00 00
MYBURGER Cut Film
Load: Print: Save: Exit



Score: 00 00 00
Laps: 00 00 00
Time: 00 00 00
MYBURGER Cut Film
Load: Print: Save: Exit

STEP 5



DUCK



(Above) The obligatory before and after shot. On the top, here's how I looked before I discovered the power of fuel-injected turbo 486 33MHz machines, and on the bottom, here's how I look today, safe in the knowledge that I'll never have a frame rate problem again.

(Below) Oh dear! You've lost control over Lynch Canyon and given the Doc an opportunity to rearrange your vital parts. He's sure to get you flying again... walking might be a bit of a problem though, don't you think? Oh do stop dribbling!



IN PERSPECTIVE

Stunt Island really sits in a unique position. On the one side it is comparable with world creators like *3D Construction Kit II*, while on the other you have playable, challenge based flight sims like *Chuck Yeager's Air Combat*, but nothing else really encompasses the range of elements found in *Stunt Island*.

3D Construction Kit II

Chuck Yeager's Air Combat

Stunt Island

The island has been equipped with a selection of permanent sets which can be used for the most popular stunts. These include replicas of landmarks like the Golden Gate bridge, Alcatraz and Stonehenge, there's also a huge properties store which can supply anything from a model of Big Ben to police cars and trains. So it's technically possible to set up the stunts that even the most warped directors dream of. The emphasis on *Stunt Island*, however, is on stunts that involve aircraft.

The Lee Majors school of stunts

You aren't obliged to spend hours and hours preparing for a single stunt, there are many jolly japes to be had from simply hopping off to the airport, taking one of the 48 aircraft out for a spin over the island exploring its 34 fixed sets. There is also a sequence of 32 pre-set stunts which can be flown individually for practice, or in order as part of the Stunt Pilot of the Year competition. For each of these you are allowed just a few takes. Mess up too often and you'll find yourself packing up your busted Jenny stunt plane and lugging it onto the ferry home.

The stunts you are expected to complete include some well known movie highlights, like flying your Fokker Triplane through a barn while dodging the passing combine harvesters. And having finally managed to fly through the barn successfully, what sort of reward did I get? A flurry of feathers and squawking chickens? A half-naked, breathless and desperately surprised rustic couple clasping an old travelling rug for protection? Nope, nothing! Call that authentic? That's actually one of the easier stunts, others are completely suicidal. When, for example, did any intelligent stunt man get talked into deliberately crashing a light plane into the engine of a 747?

If you manage to fly stunts successfully, you not only get kudos, but the spondulicks begin rolling in too, although large sums are lopped off your fee for each plane you crash and each take you use. Get everything right in the first take, however, and you'll be wining and dining the island's traumatised wildlife with a huge cash bonus.

Stunt double

If flying stunts was all *Stunt Island* was about, it would still be a superb product, although not, perhaps, meriting such a large price tag. But flying is only half the story. *Stunt Island* is just as much a film production sim as a flight sim, and it's this that makes it so unique.

If your one and only interest is crashing planes then you can get away with wimping out on the post-production aspects of film making. For those who fancy themselves as the logical successor to George Lucas, however, editing is probably going to be the most enjoyable part of the whole process. Essentially it works exactly as it does in real-life, with the exception that you are working with disk space rather than celluloid, so mistakes are considerably less expensive.

Your objective is to take all the footage that you've shot during the course of the stunt, which could be as many as eight 'reels' of film from eight different cameras, and cut it all together into a single film. Your first half-hour playing

around in the editing suite will make you realise just how little of the original footage makes it to the final print, and just what extent clever editing can disguise mistakes or shots that didn't turn out quite as the director hoped. For example one stunt I filmed worked perfectly except that I managed to clip the edge of a building just after landing. Rather than film the whole thing again, a bit of experiment in the editing room identified a way of cutting two shots together so that the plane appears to taxi and stop without error, and my flying becomes as perfect as it never was.

What's up doc?

Although a lot of thought has gone into the general presentation of *Stunt Island*, and the software is very sophisticated and powerful, it's nice to see that Disney haven't taken their subject too seriously. Crash during a stunt and you'll find yourself coming round under the manic glare of the island doctor. This and many aspects of *Stunt Island* really come into their own when you have a sound device capable of reproducing the hilarious speech. A *Sound Blaster* does the job superbly, but the output from Disney's own *Sound Source* is very good if you're working to a lower budget.

If you don't have a *Sound Blaster*, and are really serious about this product, then a *Sound Source* is actually quite a good investment

because without it you won't be able to dub in the great soundtracks that are supplied. These all sound as if they are taken from mid-seventies film and TV shows. Three tracks labelled 'Action 1, 2, and 3' for instance, would all sound at home in an episode of *Starsky and Hutch*.

Visibly superior

From sound to vision, and we find that the Yanks have poached one of Britain's finest to do all the tricky technical stuff for them. The man in question is none other than Adrian Stephens of *The Assembly Line*, who showed what he could do with 3D on the PC with the visibly splendid but playably challenged *Cybercon 3*. In *Stunt Island* our Ade has really done us proud. The ground detail has been left sparse over most of the island so that it can be highly detailed on the sets, which is where it really matters. But the crowning glory are the planes, which all have glorious technicolour Gouraud shading. You'll need a powerful machine to get the most out of all this visual splendour, but on slower machines the best graphical bits can be sacrificed for a bit of extra speed.

Even the fast machines that we used for the review couldn't disguise the occasional glitch in the system... laugh as your plane apparently climbs over low buildings, squeal as the mountains leap out to momentarily enfold your tiny aircraft, shriek with delight as you fly through the suspension wires on the Golden Gate bridge without coming out the other side in slices.

The final reel

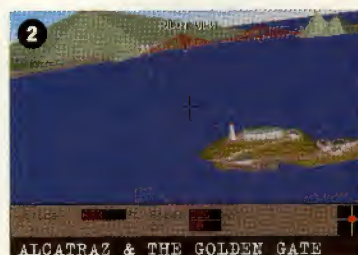
It's difficult to know what sort of games player to recommend *Stunt Island* to. It isn't going to appeal to hardened flight sim addicts; despite the wealth of planes, none of the flight modes seem to be particularly accurate. On the other hand, if you like doing all the things that you're not supposed to do with flight sims, and think that Spielberg is overrated then there's plenty here to keep you occupied. Over to you Dennis Norden... if, like me, you're one of those people who thinks that an aileron is a new kind of washing powder (*Isn't it? Ed*), but who knows the difference between a best boy and a key grip then you are going to like this a lot. **Z**

(Right) Some of the stunts are m hair-raising for the ot participants than for you. Here c of your colleagues stands at Alcatraz waiting for you to pl him off with your plane. If you m up this one, the boss will m mincemeat of you for mak mincemeat of h



STUNT ISLAND LOCATIONS

The Island is equipped with 34 fixed sets. Come with us on the Zone studio's tour of ten of the best.



PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K

Minimum Processor: 386SX

Minimum Speed: 16MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 13Mb

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Sound Cards: The Sound Source, Thunder Board, Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib, Roland MT32/LAPC-1

Controls: Keyboard, Joystick, Mouse

Comments: Although the game will run with just 640Kb of RAM, 2Mb of expanded or extended RAM is recommended to speed things up a bit. The game gets to a playable speed with decent graphics at around 25MHz, anything less and you'll have to start switching detail off. If your joystick has a thrust control, Stunt Island will support it. If you have a Sound Blaster or a sampler, you can make your own VOC files to use as sound effects and voice-overs.

PC ZONE score

A unique simulation that combines all the fun elements of flight sims with superb 3D construction, film and editing utilities. A bit on the pricey side, but good value for film buffs nonetheless.

82

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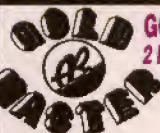
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Lemmings 2: The Tribes



LEMMINGS FOR VIRGINS



If you're one of the very few people who has yet to experience *Lemmings*, you might perhaps be wondering what all the fuss is about. The principle behind *Lemmings* is to guide a collection of cute but stupidly suicidal lemmings safely from the entrance to the exit on each level. Normally lemmings are walkers, and they will walk in one direction until they hit an object and turn around or until they come to a horribly sticky end. The way to get the little critters home is to assign individual lemmings specific tasks like digging holes or building bridges. The puzzles presented in each level get increasingly difficult, but the game is so addictive that many people found themselves sitting up till the early hours to finish it.

Polar Lemmings - anxious to go home and rub noses.

Laurence Scotford plays good Samaritan for a second time to a host of small blue furry things that have an uncanny knack of going 'Splat!'



ET THOSE MIDNIGHT SNACKS lined up, employ a good divorce lawyer, and buy in a lorry load of Natracalm, because the lemmings are back with twelve completely new wardrobes that are going to have puzzle addicts once again burning the midnight oil to a severe degree.

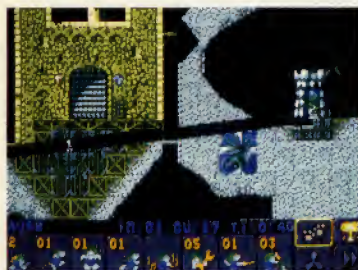
Lemmings fans world-wide can rejoice, for this is not just a new set of levels, as *Oh No! More Lemmings* was, it's a complete reworking of the original game. When a game as successful as



Circus Lemmings - always happy to give pal a lift.



The map screen shows each lemming land and the location of all the tribes. As levels are completed the sections of the talisman move in towards the centre until they finally come together.



Some of the best architecture is to be found in the medieval world.



Outdoor Lemmings could get if you play badly

Lemmings is revised, there is always a danger that the extra elements and new ideas that are injected don't really enhance the game but actually detract from the virtues that made it so good in the first place. *Lemmings* aficionados will be greatly relieved to discover that DMA Design hasn't let this happen to its most famous baby. Let's make no bones about it, *Lemmings 2* is a winner.

The Story So Far...

One thing that DMA Design haven't been able to resist is pushing the 'cute' aspect of the game to the limit by adding an animated intro sequence. This tells how the thriving lemming community was split into twelve tribes, each with different skills and qualities. Being lemmings of course, they couldn't live happily ever after because that sort of thing just doesn't happen to creatures that are so accident prone.

It transpires that a terrible disaster is about to overcome lemming land. What could this be one wonders? A pack of rats have moved in and are lowering the tone of the neighbourhood? The local branch of EXIT has closed down? What could possibly go wrong for animals whose entire existence revolves around stepping under the number 12 bus or admiring Beachy Head from both the top and the bottom within the same five seconds? Anyway, whatever the problem is, it's up to you to save them, and the only way to do that is to reunite the twelve tribes. When the tribes were first created each took a part of an ancient and powerful talisman, and it is the act of bringing this talisman together again that will ultimately save them from extinction.

Tribal Tribulations

Having the twelve tribes is essentially an excuse for extending the scope of the game by creating twelve different environments, each of which presents its

miniature inhabitants with new challenges. The Polar Lemmings for example, quite frequently find themselves slipping about on patches of ice, while the Cavelems have dinosaurs to contend with. Each of the tribes also has its own theme music appropriate to the setting. The rendition of Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer is almost as good as How Much is That Doggie in the Window?

Another important new feature is the new range of skills available. In addition to the nine skills that were available in the original game there are now forty-three additional skills, ranging from the mundane platformer - which makes the lemming build new sections of platform over gaps and holes, to the exotic twister - which makes the lemming spin round like a whirling dervish and make irregular tunnels.

You can play whichever of the tribes you wish, and switch back and forth between them if you get stuck. This prevents the game from becoming frustrating if you can't

seem to finish a particular level.

Subsequent levels for each tribe get progressively harder, and there is a further problem which complicates matters. Your objective in each level is to get all of the lemmings safely home

but you don't need to do so to progress to the next level. If you begin a level with sixty lemmings however, and get only twenty of them safely home then you only have twenty lemmings to carry forward into the next level!

No Need for Suicide

Lemmings fans, and indeed those who have yet to sample the delights of lemming mastery, can pick-up a copy of *Lemmings 2* safe in the knowledge that the second game is going to be just as big a hit as the first. It's evidently not true that *Lemmings* couldn't be improved upon. This game has more variety, more humour, and more fun all round. A game no self-respecting software collection should be without. **Z**

One new principle to master is the use of moveable objects like the canon.



PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K

Minimum Processor: 80286

Minimum Speed: 12MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 6Mb

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Sound Cards: Sound Blaster, Sound Blaster Pro, Ad-Lib, Ad-Lib Gold, Roland LAPC-1

Controls: Joystick, Mouse

Comments: If you have expanded or extended memory, it will be used to load additional sound effects.

PC ZONE score

A brilliant reworking of one of the best computer games ever written.



Price: £39.99 Out: Now

Published: Psygnosis

Telephone: 051 7095755



Meet the Lemmings

These are the twelve lemmings tribes. Each has its own slightly different set of skills and works in a relevant environment which may present its own particular difficulties.

Space Lemmings have their heads in the stars.



Egyptian Lemmings can be charming when they want to be.



Armageddon!

The Armageddon option can be used for terminating all your lemmings at once and is even more spectacular than it was in the first game. Now as each lemming explodes it blows away the lemmings nearest to it.

Classic Lemmings

Good, old fashioned common or garden lemmings. They will be familiar to die-hard lemmings addicts as the critters from the original game.

Space Lemmings

These futuristic lemmings, led by the world-renowned Yuri Lemarin and Neil Lemstrong, face unusual risks like being sucked out of the airlock, but they can at least use their teleports to get around.

Shadow Lemmings

Having grown up as Teenage Mutant Ninja Lemmings, these shady characters should be pretty good at bumping off other lemmings. But being of that insanely suicidal breed, they usually get each other first.

Circus Lemmings

Ever heard of tightrope falling, or tumbling, or the lemming cannonball? No? Well you've obviously never come across the Circus Lemmings then.

Cavelems

Witness the sight of the lovely Raqlern Welch in her skimpy fur-lined bikini being carried aloft by the notorious lemodactyl, while Lemosaurus Rex battles it out with a Stegolemosaurus below.

Egyptian Lemmings

Pharaoh Lemonkhamen is most upset at not being able to hang around long enough to see his pyramids finished. Construction is a speciality for these critters.

Medieval Lemmings

Ye olde worlde lemminges are much to be admir'd for their courage in ye face of adversitie. Namelie suche fatigues of ye bodie as divers diseases and plague, or ye meetinge of an earlie deathe through sworde play.

Polar

Brrr! Polar Lemmings – when they aren't snuggled up at home rubbing noses – like to go skating... off the edges of crevasses, usually.

Outdoor Lemmings

We are lemojacks and we're ok, We work all night and we die all day We cut down trees, we skip and jump, We like to press wild flowers We put on women's clothing and hang around in bars.

Highland

McLemming's glorious clan are nae fools. The lochside laddies and their wee hens and bairns are ready to toss cabers on command and escape lemming land before they all become haggis mix.

Beach Lemmings

They're the coolest lemmings in the world – surfen' dudes and beach bums. No one kicks sand in a beach lemming's face, so chill out and listen to The Beach Lem's rendition of Lemo-ann. Here we go, 1, 2, 3 ... Lem lem lem. Lem lemo-ann. Lem lem lem. Lem lemo-ann. Oh lemoann, die when you can... rockin' and a fallin', rockin' and a droppin' lemo-ann.

Sport Lemmings

The healthiest bunch of lemmings in the land. Ever heard of Lemford Christie, Fatima Lembred, or Dalem Thompson? These fine examples of lemming athleticism are ready for anything.



Medieval Lemmings are definitely not pointless.

Lemming Skills

There are now 52 different lemming skills, divided into six categories.

Wind Skills



BALLOONER: Ballooners, like other wind skill users, can be blown about by using the fan.

Other wind skills: Magic Carpet, Jet pack, Twister, Surfer, Parachuter, Hang Glider, Icarus Wings.

Ground Removing Skills



LASER BLASTER: Used for making holes in platforms from underneath, and possibly for crisping other lemmings, depending on how good your aim is.

Other ground removing skills: Scooper, Club Basher, Digger, Basher, Miner, Fencer, Stomper, Flame Thrower, Exploder, Bomber.

Building Skills



FILLER: Pour quick setting cement into holes and depressions to fill them up.

Other building skills: Builder, Planter, Stacker, Platformer, Sand Pourer, Glue Pourer.

Shooting Skills



ARCHER: The archer shoots arrows which can become obstacles or burst balloons.

Other shooting skills: Thrower, Bazooka, Spearer, Mortar, Roper.

Movement Skills



SKIER: Skiers are superb at getting across large gaps, given a good downhill run.

Other movement skills: Walker, Runner, Jumper, Hopper, Skater, Kayaker, Swimmer, Roller, Climber, Booter, Pole Vault, Diver, Slider, Rock Climber, Shimmier.

Miscellaneous Skills



ATTRACTOR: The Attractor plays music and makes all the other lemmings stop and dance.

Other miscellaneous skills: Super Lemming, Floater, Blocker

Chess games make most of the PC Zone team start feeling strangely nervous but Mark Burgess simply affects a heavy Russian accent and says "Sicilian Defence" a lot.



(Below) Kasparov (black) resigns after B x f4 from Anatoly Karpov pins down his King. Skelleftea 1989



IGEL SHORT is the only Briton this century to challenge the world chess championship. Well, if he can do it... Time, perhaps to brush up your game? Is a chess program the alternative to months of total humiliation at your local chess club? Nothing can beat the feeling of a human opponent, but a computer will not smirk as you lose the fiftieth game in a row. Chess programs are there to make learning easier and to keep embarrassing failures to themselves.

The Complete Chess System is a new contender. Does it offer anything more than its rivals? It is an integrated package with a library of about 15,000 Grand Master games and a very respectable ELO (No crap music jokes please. Ed) rating of 2243 - that's about the level of a strong Club player. For comparison, Kasparov is about 2800.

After the usual nonsense with the manual you are presented with a clear and uncluttered screen. A 2D overview of a chessboard with a pleasant Staunton set takes up two thirds of the display.

Options

The menu bar is hidden in normal use, but placing the mouse cursor at the top of the screen will cause it to reappear. The first box is the file menu which has the normal options of 'New', 'Load' and 'Save'. The 'About' option gives the team who are behind the program and also gives the size of the hash table (if any). The hash table can be up to 2Mb and dramatically improves the computer's performance. You can add your name from this menu (if it is no more than five characters). 'Preferences' allows you to tailor the game on start-up, the 'Print' option will send moves to the PRN port in either Forsythe notation, ASCII or as printer-dependent graphics. Games can also be exported to .TXT files.

Next is the view menu which lets you toggle between 2 and 3D and gives an overview of the entire game. You can load other pieces (a toy set is included) and even design your own. There is an option to change the colour of the pieces and the orientation and colour of the board. From this menu you can set up conditional branch structures for games. Lastly the view menu allows you to toggle display of standard co-ordinates and choose the notation for the game record.

The control menu is more conventional: swap sides, self play, supervisor (where the computer acts as referee between two human players), move now, forwards, replay and so forth. 'Thinking' means that the computer considers its response while you think of your move. The computer can be handicapped, sorry - differently abled with this option. 'Book control' does not just get the computer to play standard openings - you can force it to play perverse and unusual openings with random strength - i.e. crappy moves no-one's heard of. The most unusual item on this menu is Modem, so you can play chess by 'phone.

Playing the computer

The 'Special' menu gives you hints and keyboard entry, assesses your ELO grade (like total humiliation) and boasts about its own. From this menu you can choose the level of your opponent. The program plays a great number of levels, from the frankly incompetent



"...step in at any point and take Karpov to the cleaners - maybe."



File View Cont



Timman, J
000:00:00



Kasparov, G
000:00:40

Tilburg 19
1-0

27	Qf4	h6
28	Ra1	Kh7
29	Rca2	Nf8
30	Ra5	c5
31	Qe5	Qxe
32	Nxe5	b6
33	Ra7	Re6
34	f4	Ng6
35	Nd7	Rd6
36	Rb7	c4
37	dx c4	Re3
38	Kf2	Re7
39	Raa7	

THE COMPETITION

There are all sorts of chess games out there. If you are an absolute beginner, go for Chessmaster. Otherwise, Fritz or MChess for brute strength and The Complete Chess System for a compromise between user friendliness and usefulness.

Fritz

ELO rating: 2253 (386)

Price: £37.45

Score: 75

Publisher: CB Software

Telephone: 0302 890000

Two-dimensional display

only. Programmed by Frans

Morsch, Fritz has a good

clear display and an

extensive library of games.

Accepts files from chess

database, ChessBase.

MChess

ELO rating: 2253 (386)

2305 (486)

Price: £79.00

Score: 75

Publisher: CB Software

Telephone: 0302 890000

Two-dimensional display

only. Winner of the 1991

World Personal Computer

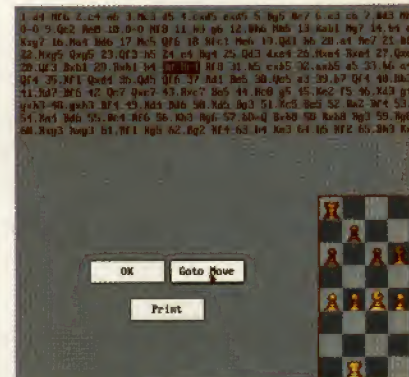
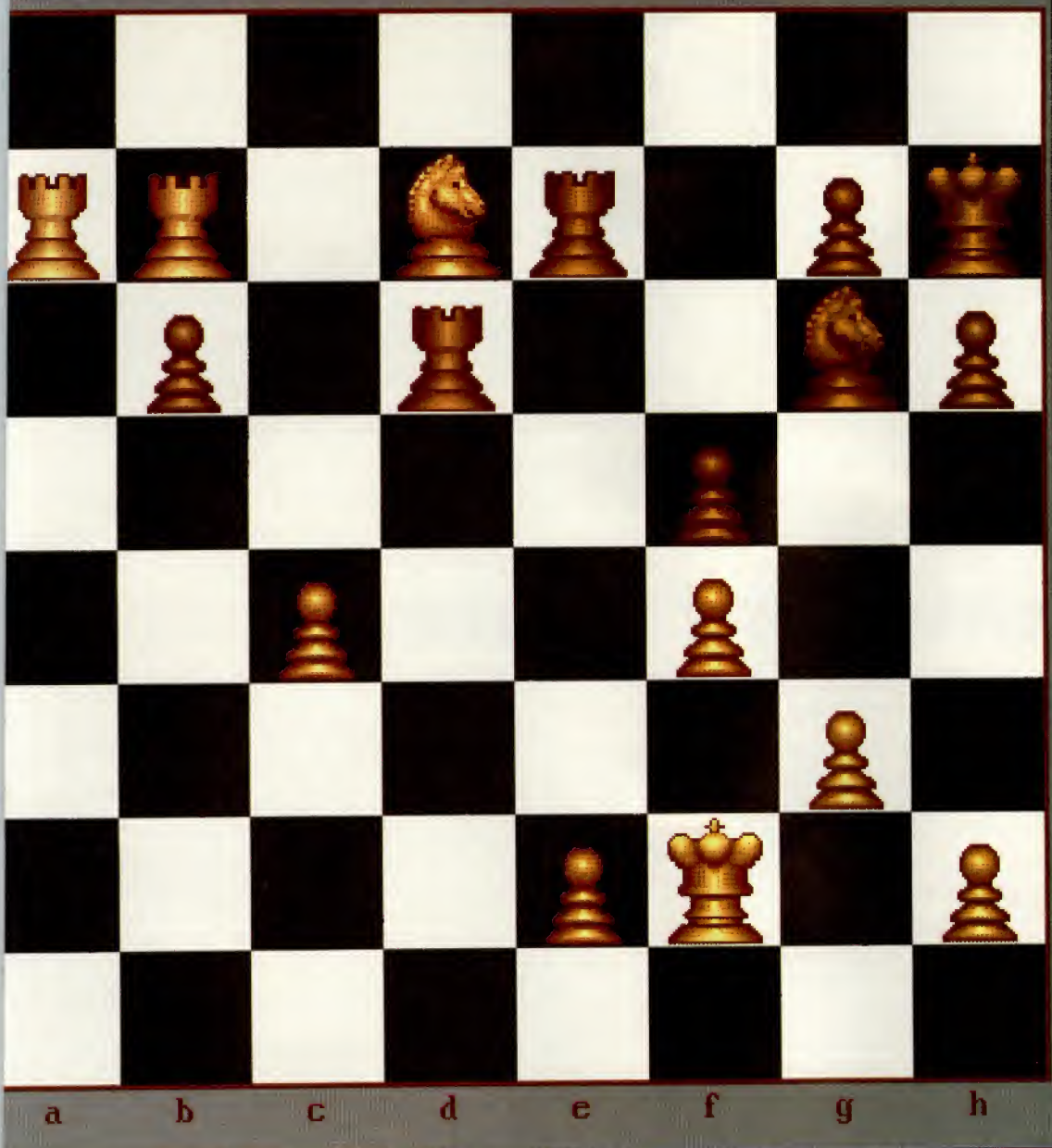
Chess Championship, this is

a tough opponent in an

uncompromising package.

The Complete Chess System

al Database Alter Pieces



(Above) Go to any move and alter history!
(Left) Garry on the ropes again. Plucky Jan Timman has cornered the black King. Nf+ then Ra8 or Rb8++



PCZONE specs

- Minimum Memory: 640K
- Minimum Processor: 8086
- Minimum Speed: 12MHz
- Installation: Essential
- Minimum Hard Disk: 2Mb
- Minimum Graphics: Hercules (true!)
- Sound Cards: None
- Controls: Keyboard, Mouse
- Comments: Will run on 8086 but 386 or greater recommended, DOS 3.3 or higher

Chessmaster Sargon 5 3000

ELO Rating: Unknown
Price: £35.99
Score: 80
Publisher: Mindscape
Telephone: 0444 831761
A superb package, full of useful features. It is not as strong as the two above, but more friendly to the beginner.

ELO rating: 2133
Price: £35.99
Score: 65
Publisher: Activision
Telephone: ?

Not as graphically good as Chessmaster (although the 3D effect is better), nor as strong a player as Fritz.

Further information
The British Chess Federation can be reached on 0424 442 500

to a scary 'infinite' thought mode, where the machine ponders the universe until you prod it into moving. There are ten levels of 'weak' opponent alone.

Play Capablanca

The Complete Chess System makes a great deal of noise about its database. You can search, build, sort and retrieve from it and it's fairly tolerant of wildcards. When you run through matches you can insert branches, or step in at any point and take Karpov to the cleaners - maybe.

I found the database the most frustrating part of the program. Twelve are supplied. If you want to look for a certain game you open each one in turn and search. I'm sure this could have been made easier - if only by restricting the twelve databases to groups of letters, like a telephone directory. ☒

Chess System



PCZONE score

Good enough for the expert, easy enough for the beginner.

80

Price: £34.99 Out: Now
Published: Kompart Uk Ltd.
Telephone: 0727 868005

TRANSEND SHAREWARE APRIL — TRANSEN

'The Shareware' section is the definitive monthly guide to low cost software for home users and small businesses. In this, the first issue, we explain the basic concept of shareware and why this excellent marketing idea is growing in popularity. We then review a selection of the best selling shareware available from our expanding range of software. As a reader service we have provided an order form at the end of this section enabling you to read the reviews, complete the order form and be using the package of your choice within 24 hours.



Code 20000, The Catacomb Trilogy

Shareware Concept

The shareware concept, which has existed for many years, provides software authors with a low cost distribution method for their programs. It allows them to dispense with the associated costs of marketing that result in the high price of commercial packages. This means that shareware authors are able to offer excellent quality products to you at a lower price. The greatest benefit is that you can assess the programs suitability to your needs and compatibility with your machine

BEFORE YOU BUY IT!

When you wish to place an order for a shareware disk it is just like dealing with any mail order company. Either you call direct and order with your credit card or you send a cheque or postal order along with the completed order form. The order is then processed and your disks are despatched within 24 Hours. When you receive your programs you have approximately 90 days in which to assess them and if you find the program is not suited to your needs you simply stop using it.

WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU GET?

Shareware packages will include a disk with the title of the program printed on them, the full working version of the program (unless otherwise stated) and documentation on-disk to help you get started and instructions for use. They will also have an installation menu to help you put the program on to your hard disc. In the installation menu there is a small tutor to help you learn about file transfers etc. It also includes a document reader and print routine to enable you to view and print the documentation and on-disk manual included by the Author.

AFTER THE ASSESSMENT PERIOD

As the shareware system is one based on trust you are left to decide to buy the program with full printed manuals. Most people order a number of programs before choosing the one they wish to register. The cost of each program is included on every disk and when you decide to buy a program the registration fee is sent to the Author, usually via ourselves. A commercial version is then despatched complete with printed manuals and professionally packaged. When you receive the registered version it will be the latest up-to-date version providing all the latest features of that product. If you decide not to register any of the packages all we ask is that you wipe the disks clean or pass them on to a friend who may wish to assess them.

Now read through the reviews to discover the amazing software products available through Shareware and keep looking each month for new and different packages.

ADVENTURE COLLECTION

Order Code: 10030 **Total Disks: 1**
An excellent collection of three text based adventures involving various challenges. Many puzzles must be solved and treasures found to complete your adventures. You are sure to get lost if you don't map out these detailed games so keep a pad and pencil to hand. While away those dark winter evenings and exercise the grey matter at the same time!

ALIENS ATE MY BABYSITTER

Order Code: 4440 **Total Disks: 1**
This is a special edition of the Commander Keen series from Apogee and the best one yet. As 'Billy Blaze', the adventure begins

when your babysitter is kidnapped by Aliens from Fribbulus Xax, she is on the main menu for dinner! With your parents due home soon, how will you be able to tell them that the "Aliens Ate My Babysitter"? This smooth scrolling, flicker free graphical adventure game is a must for your collection and as with all later Apogee games this comes with soundblaster support. Requires EGA.

BATTLESHIP

Order Code: 1080 **Total Disks: 1**
The good old fashioned game of battleships, well not quite. The author has cleverly brought battleships bang up-to-date (pardon the pun). Presented in VGA colour graphics and using a mouse, the game looks good and is easy to play. However, the tactics have become more devious. In this computerised version of the classroom favourite each opponent has the ability to plant mines, sweep for mines or even have submarines that dive. Islands can also be placed around the playing area with the result that every game can be different. A very impressive range of innovative features certainly refresh this otherwise flat game. You play against the computer which makes the game even more interesting. Certainly one to add to the collection of board games available on shareware such as monopoly and chess. Requires VGA.

BRIX

Order Code: 10540 **Total Disks: 1**
Any game that tests my logical mind is always a winner with me, and this excellent game of Brix is top of my list. It is an arcade puzzler game that tests your ability to think fast and move quickly. The idea is to pick up individual blocks, move them around and drop them next to matching blocks to make them disappear. When all the blocks have gone you move on to the next level, sound easy? Well the first few levels are just to get you used to the game, but, the other 100

ONLY £2.95 PER DISK — ONLY £2

SHAREWARE APRIL — TRANSEND SHAREWARE

levels will test you to your limit with the addition of elevators, boiling acid, lasers, lava acid and anti-grav. This game has excellent graphics and sound blaster support but does need a 286 or better to run. Requires Hard Disc & VGA.

CADDIEHACK GOLF

Order Code: 9160

Total Disks: 1

There are few games of 18 hole golf available on shareware so it is a relief that the few that are available are good. This playable demonstration of Caddiehack golf has good 3d style graphics of the golf course with sky, trees and of course a fairway all in plain view. Up to 10 people may play together so this can be a fun game for all the family. Requires EGA.

CAPTURE THE FLAG

Order Code: 9040

Total Disks: 1

For those not impressed by arcade shoot 'em ups comes this excellent version of the popular outdoor sport. A challenging game of strategy graphically portrayed in such detailed graphics as to leave me speechless. You must capture your opponents flag (the computer can be your opponent) before he gets yours. You can also capture the opponents team players. The animation is silky smooth and flicker free as your players run around the vast countryside scenario. In real life the playing area would be the size of a small village and every inch must be searched if you are to capture the flag. The on-line help is once again beyond belief, appearing automatically when you are most likely to need it. Reminders on how to use the controls, how to seek out the opponents players and beat them up, and how to move across the terrain are all supplied. These can quickly be removed so they don't get in the way during the game of an experienced player. Get your friends round to see this one today. The commercial quality makes it a market leader! Requires VGA.

COMMANDER KEEN

Order Code: 1430

Total Disks: 1

Commander Keen is published by the leading shareware arcade games company Apogee. The quality of the range, which is growing constantly, is breath taking. Apogee games test your PC hardware to its limit making best use of graphics sound and processor speed. The scrolling graphics on all titles are un-rivalled, flicker free and very detailed. Command Keen (Vol.1) sees our hero crash land and the Vorticons, the enemy in game players par lance, pinch key components from the space ship. Commander Keen must risk life and limb negotiating scene after scene of challenges to regain possession of the parts and re-build the ship. You will not believe the quality when you see this game! Requires Hard Disc & EGA.

COMMANDER KEEN 4

Order Code: 2040

Total Disks: 2

Another excellent program from Apogee, and in my opinion the best yet. I have had hours of fun playing this game which ranks higher than any commercial ones to enter the scene lately. You will not believe the graphics, flicker free scrolling, endless screens and attention to detail the programming team have put together. It lacks nothing! If you ordered a copy of Commander Keen from last months issue you must add this to your collection. The scene starts with an overhead 3D view of Keen by his spaceship, you walk to the nearest village and enter the first game section full of bouncing balls, slugs, slime

and endless goodies. After searching a few village huts and stunning a couple of slugs you discover a firemans pole, down you go into yet another section of caverns and obstacles to explore. Requires Hard Disc & EGA.

COMMANDER KEEN 4 (CGA)

Order Code: 9960

Total Disks: 1

At last ID software recognise the existence of CGA computer users who will no doubt make a mad dash for the phone, to order this disk. Thousands of Keen disks were ordered last month by EGA/VGA users proving the undying popularity of this loveable, young, hero. Guide the Commander around many levels in the hunt for his disassembled space ship. Great fun for the kids. Requires CGA.

COMMANDER KEEN IN KEEN DREAMS

Order Code: 10000

Total Disks: 1

Commander Keen has the largest fan club of any other shareware game available. Transend has scoured the world from Norway to the U.S.A. in the search for more Keen Games. We found this latest version from Gamers Edge in America, along with many other titles from ID Software, now known as the lost collection of ID Software. Your Hero is Back and needs help to rescue the captured children being held by the Vicious Vegetables. We fell about laughing at the jogging carrots, head butting parsnips and other whacky characters as we jumped, climbed and ran about the many levels. A well aimed flower bomb soon put paid to the battling vegies, but only for a few seconds to give you time to pass, save the children and leave quickly. Shin up the firemans poles to heights never reached before but before careful the potatoe doesn't bash your head in at the top. Game players every where are now queuing up for a copy of this excellent graphical game with breathtaking colours. Requires EGA.



Code 10000

CORNCOB 3D

Order Code: 8160

Total Disks: 1

Good Shareware flight simulators are a little thin on the ground (or in the air) so, we were delighted to find this one. A hard disk is preferable although you can run Corncob from a high density floppy. It is 1949 and you are in control of a standard front-line ground attack plane, you have a choice of missions on which to embark. Your objective is to complete your mission and return to base in one piece. The Author has paid a lot of attention to detail in the use of controls and instruments. It has excellent graphics and flight simulation, you can even leave the plane and walk around it if you wish. Corncob is one of the best Shareware flight simulators I used and will provide hours of entertainment for any would be Hero. Requires VGA.

CRYSTAL CAVES

Order Code: 2030

Total Disks: 1

Another top class graphical game from

Apogee in which excellent graphics are brought together with an adventure type theme as you negotiate from level to level collecting all the crystals. All the normal controls are included such as jump, fire, action (open doors, switch off equipment etc.), up, down, left and right. I started on the first screen and after visiting silicon heaven a few times I thought I had just mastered the first level when Zap!, I was transported to another area with many more problems to solve and snakes to avoid. Crystal Caves is a very addictive game and one well worth adding to your range of games software. Requires EGA.

DRUM BLASTER

Order Code: 9730

Total Disks: 1

This is a brilliant piece of software enhanced greatly for those with a soundcard. You can create and play music using various instruments and sound effects while the animated keyboard and drum player act out the song. This is a professional program that will keep you at your PC for hours. It is another offering from Epic Megagames whose name now guarantees hours of fun. Requires EGA.

DUKE NUKEM

Order Code: 1700

Total Disks: 1

This amazing arcade action game is one of many from Apogee Software and is as good as, and better, than most commercial games of this type. The graphics are very well animated as you guide the Duke, a computerised Rambo type character, around the various games blasting everything that moves. Beware of the energy sapping spikes and various alien types as you run around collecting hidden rewards and points. You are given various hints, as you discover treasures, to help you along the way. The game is very well documented and has a good quality menu system in all sections. This is a very addictive game well worth registering for the extra two chapters that are supplied. Requires Hard Disc & EGA

DEATH WATCH

Order Code: 9000

Total Disks: 1

Based in the city of Locklaven this VGA animated adventure places you in control of a party of four mystical characters. Developed in the style of Eye of the Beholder this game is easily the best role playing adventure available on shareware. A mouse makes the game more playable but is not essential. The icons displayed on the screen can be used to move your characters around the world or invoke actions such as casting a spell. The quality of graphics in Death Watch is breathtaking and adds greatly to the atmosphere of fantasy and adventure. Suitable for all ages this is sure to be one of the most popular adventure games this month. Requires VGA.



Code 9000, Deathwatch

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TRANSEND SHAREWARE APRIL — TRANSEN

STARTREK

Order Code: 1800**Total Disks: 1**

I almost had a Vulcan mind melt when I saw the colour graphics on this version of Star Trek. The screen is extremely well laid out and help is always at hand as there are many commands for the game. Your mission is to boldly go about the galaxy destroying the Klingon forces which possess many new tactical weapons and abilities. As you complete more games and improve your skills the game gets more difficult, the Klingons get more intelligent. One of the best versions of Trek available on shareware. Requires Hard Disc & EGA.

ELECTRO BODY

Order Code: 8130**Total Disks: 1**

Whenever you want top quality arcade graphics and dazzling sound you need look no further than the shareware leisure section. Electro body is without doubt one of the most stunning arcade action games. Search the maze dodging the robots and auto-firing laser guns. Brilliant digitised speech for Soundblaster users and a first class music track. Arcade addicts get this! Requires Hard Disc & VGA.

FAIRY GODMOM

Order Code: 9020**Total Disks: 1**

A group of Fairy Godmothers has been kidnapped and locked away in another dimension. Your task is to complete the 50 challenging levels involving the collection of pennies, gold coins and a key. Avoid getting caught by the pursuing crabs and reach the magic doorway which appears when you have the key and all the coins. Excellent ladders and platforms game with a puzzling twist on each level. Suitable for all the family. Requires VGA.

FORD SIMULATOR III

Order Code: 5670**Total Disks: 4**

The best Ford simulator yet, in fact I will go so far as to say that they could not bring another one out to top this one. The VGA graphics on the opening screens and of the cars themselves are amazing. You are able to look at all the Ford 1992 series of cars currently available in America. You can get all the details of what's under the hood, how much they cost and then take one for a test drive on this full VGA driving simulator. Each car behaves differently so you never get tired of using the program. The disc includes over 2.5 MegaBytes of files which is understandable when you see the gloss paint on the bodies of the cars, you can even change the colour of each model. Well worth adding to anybody's library. Due to the size of files this program is only available on 3.5" discs. Requires Hard Disc & VGA.

**Code 5670, Ford Simulator**

JILL OF THE JUNGLE

Order Code: 8250**Total Disks: 1**

This excellent game from Epic MegaGames puts them hot on the heels of Apogee for the number one spot in games programming. Its

many levels of scrolling screens and action packed adventure will happily measure up to any of the Commander Keen games. CGA, EGA or VGA modes are utilised depending on your hardware, it also has very good soundblaster support. You control our heroine Jill as she battles with different creatures in her search for weapons, gems and health giving food. A nice touch to this game is the ability to sample all the sounds heard in the game at the touch of the keys. You will not be disappointed with this disc and on registration will receive two extra volumes. Requires CGA.

INDIANA JONES DEMO

Order Code: 9950**Total Disks: 1**

A truly awesome demonstration version of Lucas' Films leading commercial game. Very rarely do we distribute demo's of commercial games, but as a service to our readers we do make one or two exceptions. The animation, Sound Blaster support and VGA graphics are brilliant. The demo can be played for some time and allows for detailed assessment before opting to buy. Requires VGA.

**Code 9950, Indiana Jones**

JOUST VGA

Order Code: 1420**Total Disks: 1**

See those gladiators fly. Fly? Yes, they come the skies on their trusty steeds, well Ostrich's actually. Joust against your opponent with this hilarious VGA arcade action game. The knights of the sky zoom around on the back of the ostrich which flaps its wings whenever you tap your 'flap' key the more you tap the higher he goes. Prang your opponent with your lance to turn him into an egg. You must smash the egg quickly or else it will hatch out again and hound you until you get the knight again, or he gets you. A very fresh addition to the arcade section, great fun and one that can be played over and over again. Requires VGA.

LAST HALF OF DARKNESS

Order Code: 9620**Total Disks: 1**

This high quality graphical adventure game is well worth adding to your library. For those who enjoyed the many text adventures from long ago this jaunt through a big old house with many rooms and objects to find will rekindle the adventurers flame within you. This is one of the best games I have reviewed of this type and the screen layout is excellent with very good graphics. Requires Hard Disc & VGA.

LLAMATRON

Order Code: 10070**Total Disks: 1**

Based on a highly addictive arcade game llamatron is a high-pressure, adrenalin pumping shoot-em up. There are masses of aliens surrounding you on all sides. Innocent llamas and other wild beast roam the screen, helpless, bleating and afraid. You must save them from the pursuing aliens, brains and (what's that, are you sure? surely not) YES! the HUGE Lavatory! Get this now! Requires VGA.

MAJOR STRYKER

Order Code: 11390**Total Disks: 2**

The game we have all been waiting for, the new release from Apogee the leading shareware games author. As Major Stryker you fly your craft using the cursor keys for direction control while blasting enemy gun ports and spaceships with the ALT key. As the game progresses you can obtain power-ups to give you more and more fire power, and you will need it if you are to survive. Again Apogee make a major breakthrough in their 3D effect scrolling screens that leave the competition standing. One of the best shoot-em-up games currently available, you won't be disappointed. Requires EGA.

**Code 11390, Major Stryker**

MARIO VGA

Order Code: 5250**Total Disks: 1**

This is an excellent adaptation of the Mario Brothers game. The game play is smooth and the graphics are as good as any other platforms type game. The task is to collect coins and to tip up the tortoises and spiders that crawl out of the pipes along the platforms. By jumping and bumping your head under the platform the tortoises are walking, on you can tip them onto their backs, they are then helpless to move. All you have to do then is get up there to knock them off. Beware! if you take too long they remove their shell, change colour and are even harder to keep up with. This game is well worth adding to your leisure library. Requires VGA.

MEGATRON VGA

Order Code: 9100**Total Disks: 3**

Aimed at high end computer users (386-20Mhz +) this futuristic game presents amazing 3d shaded graphics. Wolfenstein is the only other 3d maze game to come anywhere near. A number of sophisticated radar tools help scan the maze for the enemy which could be the computer. The game has a very advanced feature which is the ability to link to an opponent via the serial port. This allows two power users to gloat together. Disk cache is recommended to speed up the game but is not essential. 286 based P.C. owners can also play but the game is a little slower. Brilliant 3d fighting machines and full use of the VGA's 256 colours make this a stunning leisure product. Requires Hard Disc & VGA.

MIN-HA-TO

Order Code: 9980**Total Disks: 1**

An oriental Korean card game, played for points with the computer facing you as the opponent. Cards are played by each player in turn onto a playing area made of eight cards. Points are gained for matches though you can also score when the cards don't match. The deck is beautifully drawn and is a tribute to the author's programming ability. Well worth adding to your card games disks. Requires VGA.

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[illegible]

PER DISK — ONLY £2.95 PER DISK

The Legend Of Myra

Laurence Scottford gets hopping mad when he discovers that Grandslam's latest import is a load of old *Boulderdash*.



EVER WAS a truer word said than the day some copyright lawyer came up with the epithet "a good game is worth writing more than once". The software industry seems to have taken this advice to heart in a major way. There can hardly be a publisher in the land who hasn't at least contemplated ripping off *Tetris* at one time or another. Second on the list of top ten plagiarisms has to be good old *Breakout*, and third, and the one which mainly concerns us here, is the classic, *Boulderdash*.

The programmers of *The Legend of Myra* seem to have a particular affinity with the *Boulderdash* theme, since this is their second 'tribute' to it. The first attempt was the very competent *Supaplex*. In that game the emphasis was very much on problem solving, and some of the puzzles were very difficult indeed.

With *Myra* they've taken a

"The emphasis is on fast reaction skills rather than on problem solving"

completely different approach to the game and put the emphasis on fast reaction skills rather than problem solving. That's not to say that there aren't any

problems to solve in this game, there are plenty, but they aren't as complex as those in *Supaplex* and there is another fundamental difference. Once you'd solved all the puzzles on a level in *Supaplex*, you'd done enough to finish it. Not so, with *Myra*, for even if you can see how a level should be solved, you've no guarantee that you'll finish it, unless your reactions are as sharp as your mind.

It has to be said that, although the principle behind *The Legend of Myra* is

far from original, this version introduces a number of new features, some of which stop the frustration factor from spoiling the game, for instance the option to 'bust out' when you get trapped, at the expense of a life. Providing you're not a complete no-hoper at fast action games, and assuming you're not sick and tired of *Boulderdash* clones, then *The Legend of Myra* comes recommended. **Z**

IN PERSPECTIVE

There isn't a great deal of difference between any of these games in terms of playability, although *Supaplex* and *The Legend of Myra* both have extra features.

Boulderdash

The Legend Of Myra

Supaplex

In Control

If you do find that your fingers get tied when trying to control *The Legend of Myra* with a standard joystick or the keyboard, you can always invest in Grandslam's special cable which, when plugged into a parallel port, will allow you to connect a Sega Megadrive control pad for use with the game. I preferred the standard joystick, but if you're used to playing console games you may feel more comfortable with it. Note that you won't be able to use the cable with other games, but Grandslam does plan to make its own future games compatible with it. A price has yet to be fixed, but you can ring Grandslam for details.

PC ZONE score

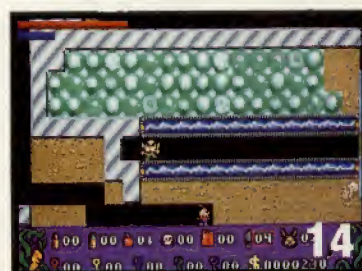
One of the best *Boulderdash* clones to appear recently. Hardly original, but fun for a while if you've got fast reflexes.

65

Price: £29.99 Out: Now
Published: Grandslam
Telephone: 081 680 7044

The easiest way to give you the flavour of *The Legend of Myra* is to talk you through one of the early levels: Intro 7: Explosive Stuff!

- 1** You begin surrounded by cabbages, mines, and bombs. When mines fall they explode, destroying all the objects in the vicinity. While you can say good-bye to one or two cabbages without worrying too much, you need all those bombs, so you must be careful how you get round this area.
- 2** You've collected all the objects, but your exit is still blocked by those rocks. It's time to put your first bomb to good use. Drop it in the middle then run like a bat out of hell.
- 3** Coming to a dead end, it doesn't take a genius to work out that what's needed here is another bomb to clear a passage through to the lower chamber.
- 4** Be careful. If you go rushing in like a bull in a china shop, you'll end up coming a cropper with that fly. Throw the knife to get rid of it first. Then claim all the cabbages in this area.
- 5** Again we're trapped within an area and the only way out is to use a bomb. The best place for it is here because it fulfils two functions simultaneously. First it clears a way through for you, and secondly it causes the rocks to fall on the bat, killing it and turning it into useful cabbages.
- 6** After collecting the cabbages, you have another bat to deal with, but this one is easily dispatched by pushing the mine on top of it. Not only does it turn into cabbages, but some of them drop through the magic wall turning into stones and killing the two bats in the chamber underneath, which also turn into cabbages.
- 7** Now dash along the corridor, collecting the knives and entering the teleport, which takes you to this small chamber with more knives to collect and another teleport, which takes you to...



8 ...a large chamber with the name LORENZO spelled out with unbreakable walls. There are plenty of cabbages here to be collected, but you must first dispatch the two flies that are buzzing around with knives. Don't worry about the troll because he's imprisoned and can't escape to impede your mission.

9 Now you have time to go back and collect those cabbages that were created earlier in the lower bat chamber, and there's another bomb for the taking in the corner.

10 Here's where things get just a little bit tricky. The only way out of this chamber is to use a bomb to trigger a chain reaction thus exploding all the mines in the outer corridor. You must follow the explosions at a safe distance, getting round to...

11 ...this room in time to dodge the deadly falling rocks and cabbages. Now pluck up the top two cabbages before moving on up the corridor.

12 At this point you must work out how to remove all the cabbages so that the mine falls directly down and blows up the rock that is blocking your exit, enabling you to get out. Believe me, it's not as easy as it looks.

13 Here's another brain exercising logic problem to solve. That bomb is easy enough to retrieve, but you also have to clear a second rock out of the way with another mine. But how do you do that without the mine falling on top of you too? If you can work it out then it only remains to destroy the third rock with a bomb, and then go and collect a replacement bomb.

14 If you've made it to this chamber quickly enough, you'll have time to clear some space under the magic wall, so that when the slime turns to cabbages it will fall through the top wall to become rocks and then the bottom wall to become cabbages again.

15 You've made it into the largest chamber in the level but your problems aren't over yet, because it's packed full of rocks and mines. If you don't get crushed to death, you're quite likely to get blown up instead. Pick your way carefully to the teleport at the top-right.

16 At last the final chamber, and it only remains to carefully consume enough cabbages to make the exit appear and then pick your way to the exit without getting crushed. Well done, only another 150 or so to go!

PC ZONE specs

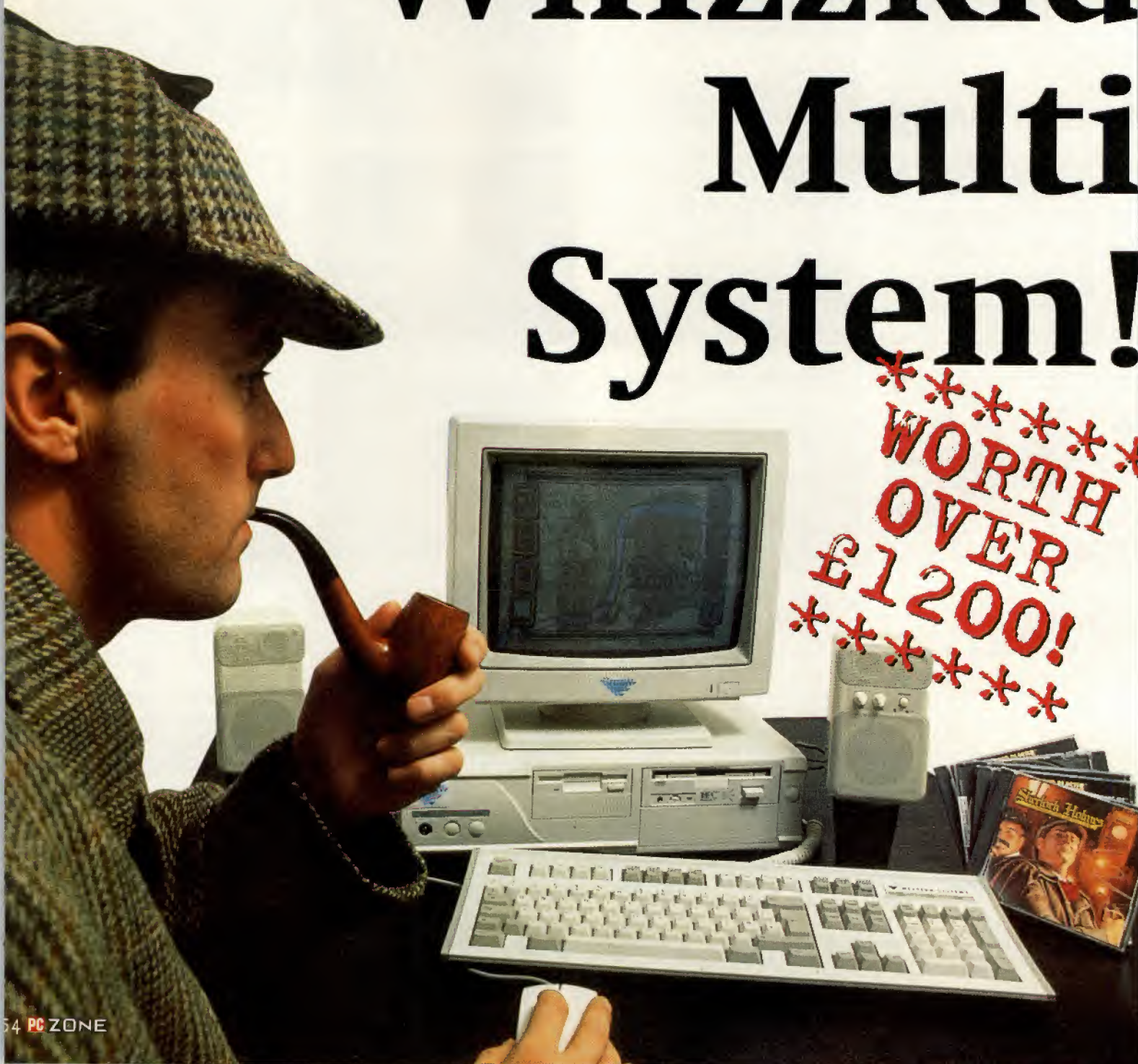
Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 8088
Minimum Speed: 12MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 6Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Sound Cards: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib
Controls: Keyboard, Joystick, Sega Mega Drive Control Pad*
Comments: There is a send-away offer for low-density disks if your drives won't read the High Density disks supplied.

*See the In Control panel.



Win A Western Whizzkid Multi System!

WORTH
OVER
£1200!



If you've been eyeing up the latest in multi-media systems but haven't got the readies available then don't worry, you can let your acquisitive tendencies get the better of you. **PC Zone** has forged a union with thrusting young company **Western Systems** and the happy result is that we can offer you a **Western Whizzkid Multi-media system** quipped with CD-ROM, sound card and stereo speakers. Games played on this system will have enhanced graphics and sound to make them alarmingly realistic, while the CD-ROM will give you access to a wealth of information from the essential to the completely useless. The Whizzkid would set you back **£1250** if you bought it, so unless you're loaded, entering the **PC Zone/Western Systems competition** is really quite a good idea.

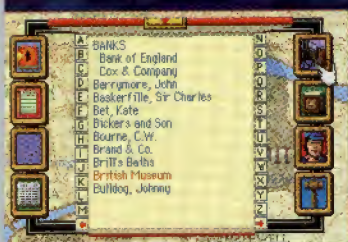
multi-media



"Here's a tricky one Holmes"



"Citrus bearing fruit tree"



"Elementary my dear Watson"



"I beg your pardon Holmes"



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- b) Inventing the first home computer with a rubber keyboard.
- c) Inventing the first mobile nautilus gym

3. Which of the following films features Virtual Reality?

- a) Bladerunner
- b) The Wizard Of Oz
- c) The Lawnmower man

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Reach For The Skies

There are old pilots and there are bold pilots. Now there are wold pilots, as Patrick McCarthy handles his plane as if it had the aerodynamic properties of a chunk of arable farmland.

FARNSWORTH GRITTED his eyes, slit his teeth and stared into the seat of his pants. Obviously his handy phrase-generation macro for WWII flight sim reviewers was malfunctioning. Damn this war. He pulled the thrush wide open on his Spitfire, pulled back on the jukebox and hurtled into the wide blue whale. He'd always wanted to be a fly-boy. Instead, his mother had insisted he join the RAF. But there was something about those specialists of the tailoring world that had always seemed glamorous, and still called him. It was the inherent danger, he supposed. Flying wasn't nearly as much fun, thought Farnsworth to himself, as he broke through the cloud cover. He recited the old maxim to himself, "Look for the Hun... in the sun." He opened the newspaper and sure enough, there they were, next to Gary Bushell's column. How apt, he thought.

Introductions

I suppose I should introduce you formally: Casual Browser in WH Smiths - *Reach for the Skies*; *Reach for the Skies* - Casual Browser in WH Smiths. It's yet another flight sim. Another chance to fly about in a pretend plane and shoot

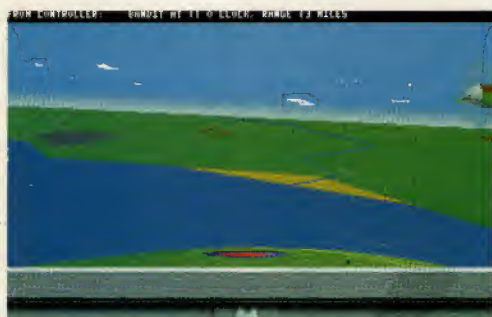
pretend people. The additional extra - the much-prized 'angle' that's supposed to give it its vital edge in the jostling, overcrowded world of the flight sim - is that as well as being one of the upper-crust, slightly mercurial pilots, you can also play the game as a controller, masterminding either The Defence of This Great Nation, or the Glorious Third Reich's attempts to over-run it. In either case, if the percentage of RAF planes in service drops below 50%, the war is over and Churchill takes his collection of cigars and books nobody's ever read to Canada. How the Canadians feel about this is not made clear.

Life with a leather helmet

But let's talk about the pilot side of things first. It's not stunning, and it's not a disaster, but there are one or two irritations. One of the most obvious is that the enemy's position is given to you in "O'clock" even when they're 45 miles away. Whatever happened to headings? The messages across the top of the screen are a bit naff, and the digitised speech is also a bit crap - I'm sure Germans don't shout "Tally ho!" to each other. The other thing I found a bit strange is that you can happily gun your wingmen down if you're bored and nobody mentions it to you when you get it.



Congratulations young man. Tell me what exactly is it you do? I'm a pilot, I fly. What do you do? Oh I go round the country pretending to be the King. It's great. You see I have this thing about shaking young men's hands.....



Kent

I'm not quite sure where Kent got its reputation from, but whoever decided it was a pretty little place wasn't looking at it from the vantage point of a Spitfire's cockpit. There are very few things down there that look like they could be described as floral in nature, and the overall effect is less that of the Garden of England than of a large municipal car park – albeit a green-painted one. This goes a long way towards explaining why the Spitfires seem to have been camouflaged by Piet Mondrian.



The Pilot

As the kind of dashing, heedless maniac that enjoys throwing scarcely controllable machines about the place without a second thought for the concept of mortality, you will find yourself constantly out-numbered by hostile enemies. But enough of motorcycle couriers, let's talk about pilots. It's almost as bad for them. The thing I found odd was that, after tiring of the insurmountable odds facing me as an RAF pilot, I tried out life as a Luftwaffe pilot and was still hopelessly out-numbered, which just shows how we've been hoodwinked by the government for all these years with all that nonsense about "the few". And that ball never crossed the line in 1966, either.

The Fat Controller

As a controller you supposedly have an important strategic role to play in the outcome of this heckish war, what with allocating one freshly-manufactured plane every two days to an airfield (yawn) and directing the whole defence initiative (four flights of planes) for the south of England as a British controller, or deciding on the relative importance of strategic targets and wiping them out (again, with only four flights) as the German equivalent. There being only two planes in a flight, you're hardly dealing with the kind of numbers you'd hoped for when you took the job. It's a bit like being a Docklands estate agent.



Extract from the Wartime Diary of Bunny Blenkinsop, RAF pilot.

5:58am Back from Leper's Arms in jeep. Run into guard at gate. Luckily impact renders him unconscious. Don't think he'll recognise me.

6:00 Morning briefing. Attention wandering slightly. New boy known as "Tiger" Atkinson-Smith similarly distracted. Kept meeting my gaze.

6:20 Briefing over. Took shower to try to sober up. "Tiger" also there. Borrowed my soap eight times. Almost warned him about stripping body of natural oils. Slipped on floor and fell. "Tiger" kindly helped me up. Strong grip, if a little misplaced.

6:30 Scramble. "Tiger" winked and said something to me as we ran to planes. Seems like a friendly enough chap.

6:32 Suddenly realise what it was "Tiger" said. Plunged into worried thought. Almost plunged into control tower, too.

6:50 Look up from reverie into sunlight to see myself surrounded by the Hun. Heckishly outnumbered, but manage to bring two of them down immediately. Judging from radio, squadron "dropping like flies." Unfortunate phrase brings "Tiger" to mind again. Savagely redouble efforts with enemy, shooting all down. Cries of comrades ringing in my ears throughout the tussle.

6:55 Try to contact squadron. No reply – all pancaked. Curse those fiendish Hun. Return to airfield sad and alone.

7:21 Muted reception at airfield. Recount tale of squadron's demise, but suitably modest about seeing off Jerry.

(The diary ends at this point. "Bunny" Blenkinsop was later court-martialled for shooting down his entire squadron, and executed at noon the same day.)

I wish, thought Hans sadly, I really wish that just once they'd let me sit in the front and drive. But more than that I wish that all those Englander Fly Boys would stop shooting at me. What have I ever done to them? I have always liked their fish and chips and supported their Lucky Arsenal. Sigh.



Extract from the Wartime Diary of Controller Karl Großes-Weltschmerz.

6:30am Decide to make impact on first day – assign flights of JU87's to bomb heavily-defended armaments convoy.

7:00 Find out I'm supposed to go along with one of the flights. Try to change target to small sweet-shop in Dorking. Too late.

7:58 Halfway across Channel as rear-gunner in Stuka, have strange feeling in pants. Find testicles shrunk to size of raisins. Didn't think a controller would need thermals. Reach down to adjust myself and accidentally shoot down wingman.

8:00 Nobody seems to have noticed disappearance of Klaus and Helmut. NB: send usual letter of condolence.

8:45 Just before target, remember I ordered "dive-bombing." Try to get pilot to change approach, but one of those career-types. Not even vivid description of potential projectile-vomiting dissuades him.

8:46 Commence dive-bombing run.

8:46:03 Rear-canopy view now obscured by breakfast.

8:46:11 Pilot moaning that I'm spoiling his new flying boots.

8:46:18 Pilot moaning that it's getting pretty full down his end. Restrain from saying "I told you so" – but impossible to close mouth for long enough to form words. Hand him note offering to change seats.

8:46:23 Change seats. Amazing what you can do mid-dive, without removing canopy. Try to drop bombs – can't. No manual in glove compartment.

8:46:41 Use machine guns instead – surprisingly ship sinks. Powerful guns, obviously.

8:48 Peeved pilot insists we change seats again. Find out gun has been "damaged" in my absence. Notice two English planes speeding towards us. Suspicious as to reasons why pilot wanted to change seats.

8:49 Pilot commences evasive action. Stomach recommences evacuative action.

(The diary is stained and illegible from this point.)



back to base, which is taking British politeness to a bit of an extreme.

The controls are a bit vague without a good-quality joystick, and tend to have an inertia effect, whereby a slight movement hardly moves you about at all,

then a little more sends you veering violently all over the sky like a stunt pilot having an epileptic fit. This problem disappears with a good joystick and with the keyboard - which is good news for office gamers who are forced for reasons of secrecy to utilise "the claw", the hideously deformed hand generated by years of using cursor keys, although it's a bit unusual these days. Also a bit unusual these days is the fact that you don't need a 50MHz monster to run it: the game runs quite smoothly on my humble 20MHz 386sx.

Desk jobs

Life as a controller isn't any better than life as a pilot. You can choose to be a controller at any point, although the manual recommends



mastering... er... pilotation first. It doesn't really make a lot of difference though, as you have to fly with the mission anyway, and ultimately you won't care if you get shot down because you, the controller, live on. The strategy side is a bit of a let-down all round really. You never get the kind of numbers of planes to deal with that make it anything other than a series of single missions, and you never really feel like you're running a war.

Sound and vision

(Original. I like it. Ed.) The graphics are pretty stark, when it comes down to it. Ground detail is minimal, which probably explains

why it runs so smoothly on a relatively low-spec PC, and even when you're supposed to be facing up to ten or twelve planes you don't actually see that many on-screen. It's a bit like being in one of those Shakespearean theatre battles that take place just the other side of the curtain.

The sound is workman-like, without being inspired in any way - the only thing of note is that the "screaming to your death" noise when being shot down is pretty impressive through a standard PC speaker. I kept flying into my wingmen just to hear it again.

Sweeping generalisations time

So it's a game that tries to combine the thrills and spills of aerial combat with large chunks of tactics and strategy. Unfortunately the aerial combat is run-of-the-mill, and the strategy is limited. There are plenty of other games that can provide the former, and one or two that can provide the latter. I can't think of any reason why anyone would want to buy it, unless they are unfortunate enough to look like one of the characters in the game and desperate to feel really involved in a flight-sim. **Z**



The real reason the RAF won the Battle of Britain. They had four planes while the poor old Luftwaffe only had one Stuka.



3 flights of Spitfires were ordered to rendezvous at position C to High Level Bomb the Port of Southampton. A close escort of 2 Spitfires has also been provided.

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 540K
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: 20MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 3.5Mb
Minimum Graphics: EGA
Sound Cards: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib, Roland MT32/LAPC-1
Controls: Keyboard, Joystick, Mouse

PC ZONE score

Uninspired WW2 flight sim with pretensions to strategy that don't stand up to close inspection

52

Price: £35.99 **Out:** Now
Published: Virgin Games
Telephone: 081 960 2255



Duncan MacDonald doesn't like **Sting** very much, and often lies awake at night fretting about the existence of the ex-*Police* vocalist. We gave him *Dune II* from Virgin as a sort of aversion therapy. It seems to have worked.



A bit of city and some sand.



IF YOU MENTION the film *Dune* to just about anyone, their reply will be either "It was a bit hard to follow," "It wasn't as good as the book," or "Ah yes, it had Sting in it, didn't it?" And you can't really argue, can you – especially with the last one? It's ridiculous really, putting Sting in a film. Just think about it... think of all the work and money that goes into making a movie. All that time and organisation. The conception and writing of the script and the agents touting this script around the film companies until someone says "Yes, we'll commit". Then the rounding up of all those people, from the lighting technicians to the sound engineers, from the 'gaffers' to the people in charge of making the sandwiches, from the actors and actresses to the stunt team, from the producer's 'secretary' to the director's 'travelling companion'. And that's just the manpower side of the equation. Added to that there's the equipment – all the cameras and lights and things. And then, of course, there are the location shoots... all the above have to be flown around the world, set up, taken down, moved on, flown around a bit more, and so on. And that's only a simplistic view – in reality it's far more complicated and far more nightmarish. So why the buggery, with all this time, effort and money on the line, does a casting director say: "Hey, let's cast Sting in it somewhere"? And, more frighteningly, why do the producer and director agree? After all, suggesting that Sting goes into a film is the same as suggesting that giant posters be stuck up outside cinemas, saying "This film has got some shitty bits in it". But I digress (*I'm not sure we want to know about that, Ed*). And anyway, the first excellent thing about

"I'm forced to conclude that this is a thinking man's shoot 'em-up."

Dune II (the game) is that it hasn't got Sting in it anywhere. But what exactly is in it, if not Sting? Bear with me...

So simple it's brilliant

There are about a billion ways one could approach the design of a game such as *Dune II*, but most of them would end up being crap... pseudy at best and over complicated at worst, in a sort of 12 disk mega extravaganza taking up 30 megs of hard-drive space and coming with a manual thicker than Henry Cooper. Virgin, however, have gone and done *Dune II* in a way that you simply wouldn't expect (well I didn't, anyway). It's one of those approaches that's so simple it makes you kick yourself and say "Aaaah, of course." *Dune II*, basically – and you'll have gathered this from the screenshots already – is very

much along the lines of *Sim City* in that you have to build things but have limited resources with which to do so... and it's viewed from above.

Death, carnage and destruction

Now call me Mr Unpleasant Personality if you like, but when I'm playing a computer game I like to be able to kill things. And if you're familiar with the *Dune* books, you'll know that violence and death feature quite heavily (in-between all the 'clever' bits, of course). So is *Dune II* just about constructing buildings and doing a bit of town planning? Not on your nelly. It's about constructing buildings, doing a bit of town planning, making loads of vehicles/weapons and then killing every single other thing on the map. And the vehicles/weapons with which you do this killing? Effective, to say the least. The number of vehicles/weapons at your disposal at any one time? Lots. And the control interface? One of

the best I've seen. Tactics? Yes, there are some serious tactics involved – but not so serious that they get in the way of the fun. So now what we have is a *Sim City* clone which is also a real-time shoot 'em-up. In fact, although I hate the term thinking man's anything, I'm forced to conclude that this is a thinking man's shoot 'em-up. ☞



A city, complete with rocket turrets and not a grain of sand to be seen.

Lots of sand, a small hamlet and some dead people.

A harvester. Probably the most vital piece of equipment on the planet Arrakis. No harvester means no spice and no spice means no dosh which means no fun.

The planet Arrakis, known as Dune.

The Spice controls the Empire.

The Emperor has proposed a challenge to each of the Houses.

So what's going on?

If you've read the book, seen the film, worn the T-shirt, bought the pencil case or are a Sting fan, then the following will make immediate sense to you. But if you've done none of the above, don't worry as it'll still be fairly clear... this game doesn't let itself get bogged down in any intricacies of plot. Here's a brief scenario, and it's all you need to know.

- 1 The planet Arrakis is a desert planet, consisting almost entirely of sand and rock.
- 2 There's a life form indigenous to Arrakis called the Sand Worm, which can grow up to 500 meters long with a diameter to match. A Sand Worm will 'eat' anything that it sees.
- 3 The Sand Worms produce a substance called Melange, which, when consumed by humans, turns out to be a powerful mind-altering drug. Melange is commonly known as Spice, and whoever controls the Spice controls the universe. (Or something like that).
- 4 Spice fields litter the surface of Arrakis and are crying out to be mined, but sometimes they are guarded by Sand Worms.
- 5 There exist three 'tribes', three space faring 'factions'. They are The Atreides, The Ordos and The Harkonnen. (Although I only remember the Atreides and the Harkonnen from the book: mind you, it's been about seven years since I read it...)

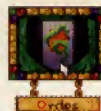
6 The Emperor (of the universe or whatever) has decreed that The Atreides, The Ordos and The Harkonnen all have equal claims to the planet Arrakis. He has proclaimed that it must be a free for all, and that whoever can harvest the most spice will prevail. In other words, he's told the houses to go to war. On the surface of Arrakis. Each house must wipe out the other two.

7 To actually harvest the spice, each house must construct a base of operations and then produce harvesters - large, slow, defenceless tracked vehicles which have to return to base every time they attain a full load. To protect the harvesters (and the base, which can grow to city size over time), each side has a number of different defence/attack vehicles at its disposal. Foot soldiers can be manufactured too. But all this costs money. It costs Spice.

8 While one vehicle can attack another vehicle and win, it can do nothing about a Sand Worm... the only protection from a Worm is for the vehicle or vehicles in question to get *off* the sand and *onto* some rock. The bases/cities can only be built on rock, by the way, in case you were wondering - so no worries there.

9 And that's about it. All there is to add is that you can choose to play the part of any one of the three houses. Will you be the saintly Atreides, the insidious Ordos or the unbelievably evil Harkonnen? (*"I want to be the Harkonnen"* - Aled Jones).





The annotated bit™

A MENTAT **B** OPTIONS **C** Credits 1367

Ordos Harvester is empty and harvesting.



Yes, *PC Zone* brings you *The Annotated Bit™*. Look at the pictures. Look at the little letters on each picture. Look at the words. Do a cross reference. Marvel at the fact that we've had the gall to claim a copyright to all this...

A The Mentat Screen: This takes you to the screen where you can obtain information on all the vehicles/buildings/people/items in the game – it updates as you progress through the levels.

B Options Screen: What you'd expect... load, save, game speed, restart entire level. That sort of stuff.

C Credits: Your dosh, which comes in the form of Spice. Each game starts you with about 1000 credits – but 1000 credits won't last for long (warfare on Arrakis costs nearly as much as doing all your shopping in Harrods).

D The Main Game Screen: Which at present is centred on your base. In fact it's just about stopped being just a mere "base" by now, and is turning into a bit of a city. (Even if it *hasn't* got a cathedral).

E The Orders Window: Absolutely anything you click on in the main game window, be it a building, a man, or a vehicle, will bring about a small menu here. Using this menu you can tell the highlighted 'thing' to do whatever it is able to do – unless it's an enemy unit, of course, in which case you just get information.

F The map window: Which shows you your entire world. Like the game *Civilisation*, you can't see a 'region' until it's been explored – so at the start of the game, before you've bought a radar station and have been out on reccies, everything is blacked out. It's worth noting that *anything* you can do in the main game window can also be done here, so if you simply want to send a harvester miles to a distant Spice field, you just do it here. Quick as a flash. The same goes for all the other vehicles. Oh, and if you *do* want to scroll the main view around it's dead fast anyway: just click, hold, and drag the little white box. Hey presto. Map centred elsewhere.

GIVING ORDERS... Vehicles



Here we're highlighted on a rather crap car thingy – a quad. This quad can either *Attack*, *Move To*, *Retreat* or *Guard*. If you tell it to *Guard* it will stay in position and attack anything that comes within range. *Retreat* will send it back to its original position (ie. where it was produced, so it'll trundle back to the light vehicle factory). *Move* allows you to send it anywhere you like. Once there it will assume *Guard* status until told otherwise (if it hasn't already been destroyed). *Attack* allows the unit to attack a particular item, be it an enemy building, an enemy vehicle, an enemy soldier or even a patch of sand if you so desire. Moreover, if the selected target is moving, your unit (in this case the quad) will keep tabs on its location and will intercept.

The choice of orders for the vehicles (and the grunts too) are generally the same. However, certain types of vehicle do have a 'special' command. For instance there's a particularly ninjafied Harkonnen tank which has the ability to self destruct, causing quite a bit of localised damage in the process. (Mind you, that's 800 credits down the drain).

IN PERSPECTIVE

Civilisation and *Populous* are closer comparisons than *Sim City*. But there are elements of all three games in *Dune II*. Before fans start foaming at the mouth remember these scores are comparative. In their own right all four games would, of course, score highly, but it's worth remembering that in relation the others, *Dune II* is a shoot 'em-up.

Civilisation

Dune II

Populous

Sim City

From the opening level (a simple instructional scenario in which the object is to make 1000 credits and not to bother attacking anything) through the middle levels (where you're eating away at the enemy's hold on Arrakis), all the way to the final level (in which - er, I don't want to give anything away but let's just say it's a nightmare), *Dune II* will have you totally hooked. It actually cured me of my withdrawal symptoms from having completed *Star Control 2*, and is so simple to get to grips with that I had it sussed in five minutes. The artificial intelligence is brilliant, as is the interface (as I've said already) - allowing you to control 50 mobile units as instinctively as if they were your own fingers. ("Speak for yourself on that one, pal" -

Joe Thresher Incident' O'Grady, ex-farm labourer). The pace of *Dune II* can easily be described as frenetic, and the overall atmosphere (especially if you've read the book or seen Sting in concert) is evocative... I liked it so much I may even go down to the bargain basement and pick up an old *Police* album for 97p. ☒

If I had to slag this game off...

There is, unfortunately, a problem with *Dune II*... its size. The battles for control of Arrakis may be big battles, fought with all the fury of a jihad, but at the end of the day there aren't very many of them. Just as you're getting *really* proficient you could suddenly find yourself in a "closing credits" situation. Playing excellently from the word go, and winning every battle in the shortest possible time, the entire game can be over in about 20 hours. But maybe you won't play excellently - and I suppose you can always play it again as one of the other houses. I suppose *Monkey Island* can be accused of the same thing, and *that's* still a classic. But I thought I ought to mention it nevertheless, so amend my score as you see fit.

GIVING ORDERS... Buildings

The interior of your construction yard complete with scrolling arrows and some nice ornamentation.



At the start of every game you have just one building: a construction facility. It produces other buildings - and some of the buildings it makes, will be able to produce items of their own once they are placed at the location of your choice. A Light Factory (that's a factory producing small scale machinery, not a factory dedicated to the production of 40w bulbs), for example, can make you quads and trikes... Ideal for reconnaissance, but not much use in a battle. A Heavy Factory can build you all manner of tanks and missile launchers, extra Spice Harvesters and even another construction facility... a mobile one, so you are able to start a second base elsewhere. Then there's your High Tech Factory (which makes flying things), the Starport (from which you can order new items from an orbiting Merchant Guild platform), WOR Trooper Facility (which makes and trains the grunts) and so on. Click on any production factory in the main game view, then click on its icon in the Orders Window, and you enter a screen like the one here (left). Take your choice, but watch your cash.



PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 565K

Minimum Processor: 286

Minimum Speed: 20MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 9Mb

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Sound Cards: Sound Blaster, Sound Blaster Pro, Ad-Lib, Ad-Lib Gold, Roland MT32/LAPC-1 and compatibles

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

Comments: Minimum memory 565K without digitised sound.

PC ZONE score

Civilisation meets *Sim City* in a frantic spice 'em-up.

89

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- b) VTOL
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2. Was the original Harrier manufactured by?

- a) Lockheed
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3. Were the Flying Tigers?

- a) A rather exotic feline circus act
- b) An American Volunteer Group in the Chinese Airforce
- c) Millwall FC.

4. Do you know what Gouraud shading is?

- a) Yes of course I do
- b) Well I think I've got a vague idea
- c) No. I haven't a clue

5. Do you really know what Gouraud shading is?

- a) Yes, yes yes.
- b) Alright I confess, no.
- c) Is it something to do with cooking?

AVIREX/HARRIER COMPETITION

Answers: 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐

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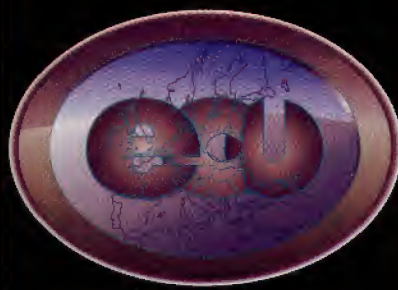
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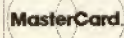
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Ever since his "momentary lapse" with a box of matches caused £60m worth of damage to York Minster, **Mark Burgess** has felt a strange kinship with Vikings. As good a reason as any for giving him *Ragnarok*.



(Above) Cute as lace pants: Sigmund Shieldmaiden sneers as she coasts to victory. But what if you're a woman?

AFTER A DAY spent murdering, raping and pillaging, how did the Vikings relax? Well, yes, they drank a fair bit; but what was their favourite game? You might imagine something along the lines of football with a monk's head or catch the greased pig. In fact, the Vikings played a board game of Zen-like purity.

Hnefatafl, the King's Table, was known throughout the Northern world and boards have been found as far apart as Ireland and the Ukraine. The game has 24 black pieces and 13 white. White has the King and his 12 retainers. Black has the army that tries to stop him reaching safety. It's a bit like press photographers pursuing a royal trying to escape to his/her love nest. Who would have thought that a seventeen hundred year old game could be so topical?

In the centre is the King surrounded by his twelve huscarls. The 24 ambushers are in groups of six at each side of the board. All the pieces move like rooks in chess: horizontally or vertically in any direction and for any distance they like. They cannot jump over other pieces and no piece except the king can occupy one of his squares (the four at each corner and the one in the centre).

Your aim is to trap the King by boxing him in with men on all four sides, or with men on three sides and his central square on the fourth. The King's aim is to reach one of his corner squares, callously sacrificing his retainers to keep his escape route clear.

Well after 17 centuries it has arrived on computer courtesy of Imagitec and published by Mirage. How does it look? The package comes with four disks, a manual and a bogus monkish chronicle. The chronicle is the supposed history of Ragnarok, the game. Knowing that he is to perish in Ragnarok (the doomsday) Odin plays a variation of Hnefatafl with the regulars of an Inn. He is trying to see if any Hnefatafl players might give him clues on how to escape his fate.

When you start the game a rather smooth animated sequence appears, showing Odin visiting the haunts of men. Then on to the game proper. The screen shows the board with the information icon, the option icon, the disk icon and the game icon.

The information item merely provides the credits. The option menu has four boxes which let you toggle the cameos, animation, music and replay.

The disk menu has icons for save game, save as, load, new game and quit. The game menu gives you the choice of King's Table, Ragnarok or practice.

You can play Hnefatafl in two player mode or against the computer. Unfortunately there is no demo mode where the computer plays itself. This would give prospective players some inside information on the strategy of the game, missing from the instructions I received - though they were not the final version.

The computer will play itself when you click on Ragnarok - although at bewildering speed. Select Practice from the game menu if you want to play. You can play another human being or the computer in one of its dozen characters.

The board is the same as for Hnefatafl. But some pieces have their own movements and attributes:

White

ODIN: Replaces the King of Hnefatafl. Moves one

square at a time, horizontally or vertically.

THOR: Moves onto any square occupied by an opponent and exchanges lives.

FREY: Moves diagonally in any direction like a bishop in chess.

VIDAR: Moves two squares horizontally or vertically. If taken, Vidar is placed back on one of the starting squares.

HEIMDALL: Moves in any direction, but only one square at a time (like the King in chess).

VALKYRIES: Move two squares horizontally or vertically, leaping over any piece in their way.

TYR: Moves horizontally and vertically. Can only be taken by being surrounded on three sides.

Black

LOKI: Same moves as Frey.

FENRIR: Same moves as a Valkyrie.

JORMUNDGAND: Same moves as Thor.

SURT: Same moves as Heimdall.

GARM: Same moves as Tyr, and can only be taken the same way.

HYRM: Same moves and attributes as Vidar.

There is a lot to remember and this is the first of the game's failings. Before every move you have to recall how your own and your opponent's pieces move. The information feature works only on your own pieces so if you've forgotten what the piece that looks like a rottweiler is and how it moves you have to look through the manual. This can be a bore when you are trying to work out what the pieces can or cannot do to you.

There is also a hint feature, which shows where you can move and what the computer reckons you ought to do next. I say a hint rather than a help feature because I played a game against Asa - a fairly undemanding opponent - and followed the hint for every move. I was swiftly reduced to Odin: the pieces hopped from square to square until they were picked off. When Odin finally got his there were still 20 black pieces on the board.

Asa is one of the characters assumed by the computer. From the game menu you can choose which of the 'characters' you play Ragnarok against. Their skill and strategy ranges from the

frankly hopeless to the formidable. If you turn on the cameo option, these animated morons pop up and cover the board immediately before their move. Challenging if you can remember the position of 37 pieces arranged on 121 squares, a royal pain in the arse if you can't. The animated battle sequence is a gory interlude of severed arms, bloody groin

wounds and other serious violence that takes place on a cruciform table draped in a white cloth. The repetitive insults of the characters and the battle sequences can be turned off, and most will want to after a couple of tries. Why spend so much programming effort on such peripherals? Enough of the distractions, how about the game itself?

The display of the board is in true perspective. The two squares to the north of the King's central square are virtually invisible and the large and jerky hand icon will jump over the piece you are trying to find. There is no way to tilt or rotate the board for easier viewing - as is done even in shareware games like Cyrus Chess.

Mirage claims that Ragnarok is a 'strategy contest to rival chess' but almost everyone knows the moves in chess. Given the time taken to learn the highly complex moves of Ragnarok, how many will decide to persevere? **Z**

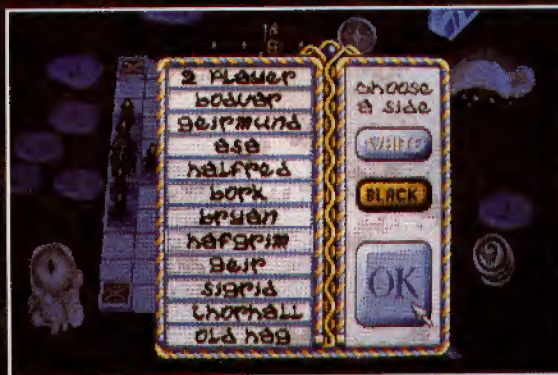
RAGNAROK



(Top) The move option gives the piece and its moves... but only on your side. (Middle left) If sublimated violence isn't good enough you can call up the real thing. (Middle right) Choose your side and your opponent. (Bottom) Nearly home and dry: all Odin has to fear now is a late tackle.



Amiga Screenshot



PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K

Minimum Processor: 8086

Minimum Speed: 4.7MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 2Mb

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Sound Cards: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

PC ZONE score

As the great man said: if you like this sort of thing, this is the sort of thing you like. Let down by too much energy spent on inessential, flashy bits and not enough on the main, interesting idea. As stand alone shareware, the King's Table would rate 75%.

60

Price: £39.99 Out: Now

Published: Mirage

Telephone: 0260 299909



BLACK PICK PIECE

Tegel's Mercenaries



As soon as we saw this was a game about mercenaries, we just had to give it to **Patrick McCarthy**, who once went so low as to write an article on "Improving your finger-strength" for **Puppy-Stranglers and Pigling-Garrotters Monthly** just because the word rate was good.



HAT A FAB idea for a game – your every venal, acquisitive action dictated neither by conscience nor

morals, but solely by the prospect of personal gain. It's the world's first "Member-of-Parliament Sim". Well alright, it's slightly more honest – at least if there's any killing to be done as a result of your decisions, there's no buck passing, you do it yourself.

I suppose you want a few measly facts about the situation. You're someone who's failed in your chosen millinery career – (Military. Ed.) – damn, I was lining up my favourite beret joke. You've failed in your military career (you probably bombed the wrong hospital or something) and rather than follow the traditional path into the prison service, have decided to become a mercenary. I was lying about you doing the shooting yourself, too – you don't. You "command" a team of up to six mercenaries from a mysterious unspecified location – they die, you laugh. Wahoo.

There are several gun-toting lunatics for you to choose between to make up your party, allegedly all with different characteristics and attitudes to blood-letting. I say allegedly because we've all read this



sort of nonsense from games companies before, listing characters' favourite foods and preferred sexual position when the only real variation is the colour of their tiny on-screen figure. Let's just say I didn't really see that great a difference in anybody's behavioural tendencies, and leave it at that.

Anyway, you're caught up in a plot involving your merry band of bastards and some rebels who have to be quashed. (You know what rebels are like – all those weird haircuts and

Beatles records are enough to make anyone want to quash them). This plot gives you the chance to visit all those exciting planets and poorly decorated buildings you read about on the box. And when you've finished all the missions – why, simply make up some more with the built-in Scenario Kit and Working Interface Developer.

Missions are paid according to how well you carry out the objectives, with bonuses for collecting certain objects or information and for killing or not killing certain people.

I shot an innocent bystander who looked suspiciously like a peroxided Lionel Blair (he really will appear in anything, won't he?) and got fined 500 credits. Still, it was worth it.

Love is all

Shall we move swiftly along, then, and say exactly what it is I hate about this game? (Yes, let's. Ed.) I hate having to sit for 45 minutes installing a game that only takes up 4Mb of hard-disk space. I hate the fact that after installing the said game, I'm presented with a multiple-page file to read, telling me lots of stuff that should be in the manual – I really think PC games should have progressed beyond that stage by now.

Do they still think only easily fobbed off hippies buy them, hoping for the *Zork 1* experience? I can understand the odd correction, but not whole lists of controls and hot-keys. Hate hate hate hate. I've a good mind to – (Yes, yes. Calm down, stop being so emotional and just get on with it. Ed.)

The game suffers badly on anything less than a 33MHz machine

On a slow machine, scrolling about the playing area takes an age, and your gang walk about like sloths after a Benylin party.

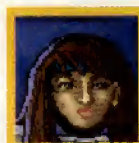
The control

system also goes to pieces. The main control method for the game involves clicking on the mercenary of your choice and then choosing one of the verbs in the box. Ideally you can string these commands together. On a slow PC, you click on something and nothing happens immediately, so you click again... and then again. Then a message tells you to do something you've just done three times. You take a deep breath, cancel all the orders and start again. Things disappear when you haven't pressed DONE and remain when you think you have. You finally get the string of orders done. Then you wait for them to be carried out. Your man wanders in little circles saying "I don't understand my orders," or even worse, just stands there doing nothing. Then you punch your monitor in the mouth.

The characters are also incredibly stupid. If two of their paths should cross, they'll bump into each other, walk in a circle, then bump into each other again. For ever. In addition, they positively love the prospect of suicide. Tell someone to walk to a certain point on the other side of a wall and then attack a baddie with a flamethrower, and they might walk up to the wall and start firing early, bouncing the shot off the wall and



(Left) A member of the local unemployed population browses wistfully in the motor-bike showroom. If only he'd become a mercenary he'd be able to afford this kind of thing.



illing themselves. The sound effects o all this are reasonable enough with a soundcard, but I don't think rap is too harsh a word for the pc speaker sound.

All in all then, it's a pretty frustrating package that not only doesn't deliver the humorous, action-packed excitement it promises, but will also have you more wound up after playing it than you were when you started. Is that what you want from your leisure software after a hard day grinding down the underprivileged? I think not. **Z**



He's a bit of a character, isn't he?

This is where you get to pick your squad members. There's no way to directly compare people by having more than one on-screen at the same time, leading to incessant paging backwards and forwards by the anally retentive. It doesn't help that the vital stuff – how good they are at killing – is three pages into the info, either. Neutralise this evil attempt to turn us all into train-spotters: just take the first six. It takes some doing, but what the hell – strike a blow for carelessness.



PC ZONE score

Not funny. Not entertaining. And not very good.

50

Price: £39.99 Out: Now
Published: Electronic Arts
Telephone: 0753 549 442



Crikey! They're... er, dudes

Suddenly, in the middle of the game, I realised I was controlling trendy people. You can tell this because they say "Yo." Which means, of course, they're really about as trendy as a *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle* and equally lacking in self-knowledge. Just tell someone to walk across the room and attack somebody and they'll mutter something like "Yo man I will like dude attack yo." One of them wanders about shouting "Conyo!" which I think is a rude word in Spanish.

IN PERSPECTIVE

Breach 2 and *Buck Rogers* are obviously very different games but there are elements of both in *Mercenaries*.

Breach II

Buck Rogers

Mercenaries

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 600K

Minimum Processor: 286

Minimum Speed: 12MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 4.5Mb

Minimum Graphics: 256VGA

Sound Cards: Adlib, Sound Blaster
(needs HIMEM.SYS)

Controls: MS-Compat Mouse essential

Blueprint

Tornado

PUBLISHER: Digital Integration

PRICE: £44.99

TELEPHONE: 0276 684 959

OUT: Late March

Gouraud shading and vast scalable rotatable bitmap systems may well be what the future holds, but right now what the flight sim world actually needs is a decent game... and that's what Digital Integration seems to be offering with its up and coming bomber simulation, *Tornado*.

In the first part of a two part preview/review (preview this month, review next month) **Duncan McDonald** looks at the front end of the simulation: the map and tactical planning sections. "Yawn" you say? Be off with you, scamp – this is profoundly brilliant stuff, and a real appetite whetter for next month's flying bits.

(Above) If you were to pan down from this shot, you'd notice that Tornado doesn't have a shadow. DI weren't sure whether or not to put one in. (Below) Gouraud shading? Incredible bitmap animation system? No it's the title screen. Oh well...



IF WE WERE to ask you which flight simulation front end has had you most impressed in the past year, your answer would probably be either Spectrum Holobyte's *Falcon 3* or the quite recent Domark's

AV8B Harrier. And we wouldn't disagree. What we would do, however, would be to tell you that as far as we can make out both of these front ends are about to have a giant one finger salute made in their general direction.

It sounds a bit twatty really, doesn't it, getting so worked up about a map... but the point is that if the planning stages of a flight sim are of a high enough quality then you get more out of the game when you're in the air. Real flight sim fiends – after spending the obligatory nine hours flying upside-down between buildings and seeing whether or not they can eject onto the bonnet of a jeep – will eventually take the manual to the toilet, digest it while having a good hearty dump, and then get stuck into all the tactical stuff that's the lifeblood of an enjoyable campaign. And this, as we all know, involves The Map. You have to be able to zoom in. You have to be able to zoom out. You have to be able to click on things and you have to have a little compass (because it looks pretty). But what else do you need? Digital Integration have been thinking about this question and have come up with a very comprehensive answer: "You need everything".

Everything? So what does that entail?

When playing *Tornado* at its highest level, you really are in complete control. We've all watched Operation Desert Storm and the subsequent skirmishes on the telly and ever since then we've wanted to do it ourselves. We've wanted to be "our very own boys"... not poncing Yank Falcon pilots, but stiff upper lip Tornado chaps. We've wanted to go on long and gruelling low level bombing missions. We've wanted to take out a baby-milk factory. And more importantly we've wanted to organise the whole shooting match, not leave it in the hands of some fat redneck. And now we can – or at least we will be able to in about a month (and by the way, the scenery packed, hilly, green landscape of *Tornado* is far more attractive than the poxy desert sands of Iraq). But that's next month. For now, here's an idea of what'll be available to you before you even take to the sky...



MAP ONE

The map as you first find it... or most of the map, anyway (you can scroll it up and down to reveal the hidden bits). "What's so brilliant about this?" you may be thinking. Well, we've only just begun, so not a great deal is stunningly brilliant at the moment – but it looks nice all the same, doesn't it? It's got a character all of its own. All those neat thin lines. That 'businesslike' menu down the side. Face it... if this map was a dog, you'd be totally cacking yourself.

MAP TWO

Aha! Now it's looking even meaner. Those lines, those lines, those contour lines. This is ordnance survey stuff with knobs on, and it's all so much bigger and scarier here on Zoom Three. Zoom One wasn't half as impressive... all you could see were the railways (black lines), roads (red lines) and rivers (blue lines). But now there are little dots coming into play. Villages. Towns. And what are those dots by the railways? Could they by any remote possibility be stations?

MAP THREE

And now we're right down in there, right amongst the people. You can virtually smell the cooking wafting from the open kitchen windows. You can almost hear the distant sounds of children playing football on the recreation fields. You can almost feel the vibration of the juggernauts as they trundle past. This is Zoom Five, the magnification mode many people will never reach... they'll have been scared away long ago, even before the dots appeared.

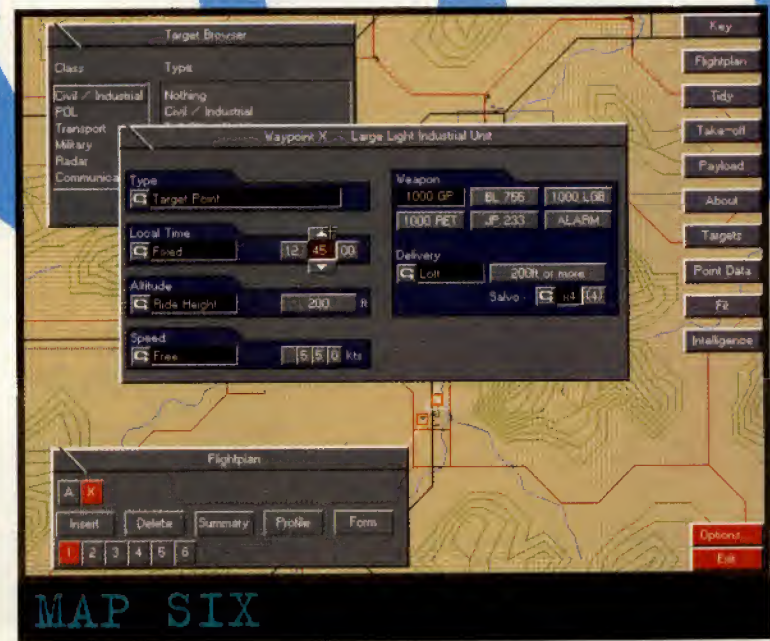
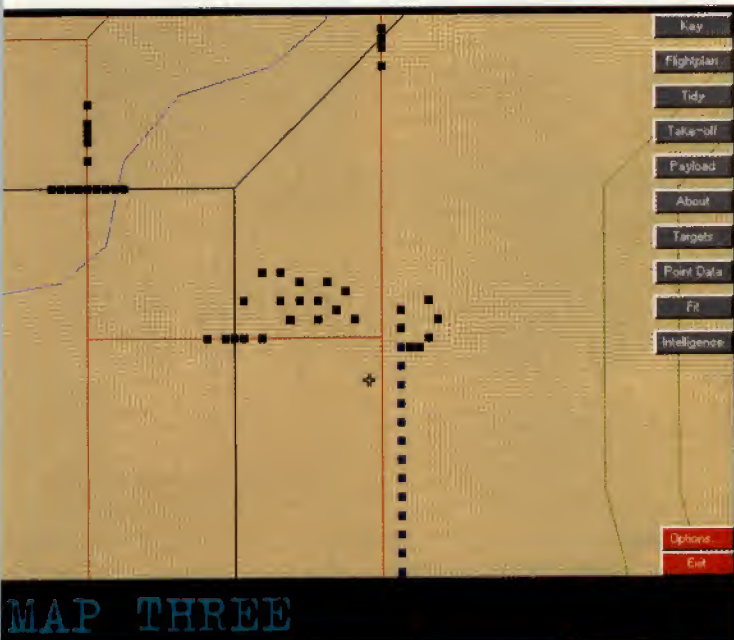
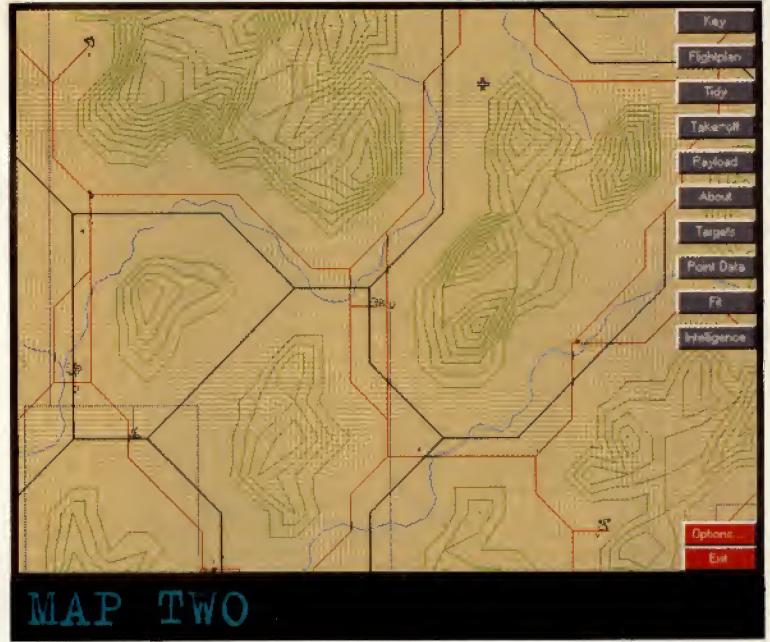
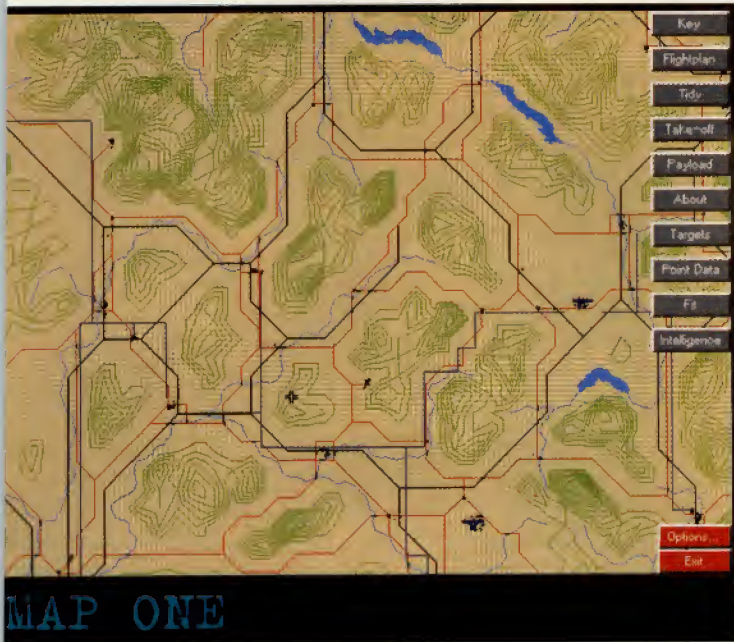
MAP FOUR

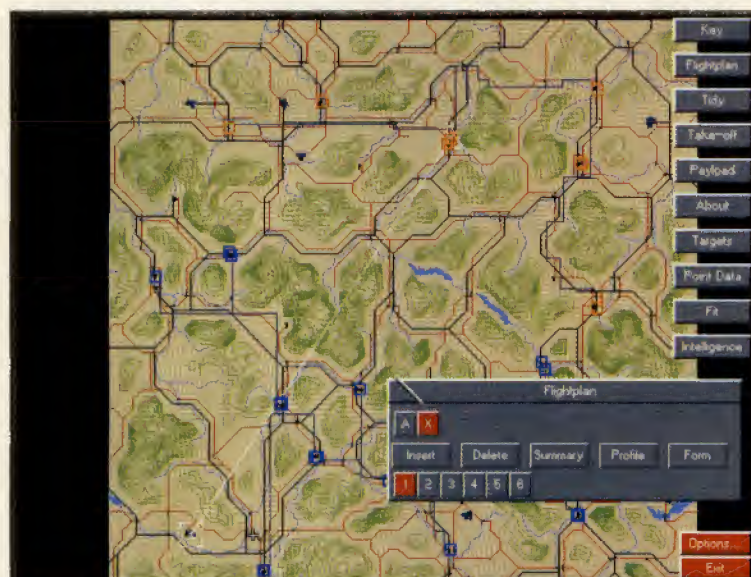
So it's back out to Zoom One for a bit of Target Browsing: and now you'll be starting to get the idea, in that it's turning into a bit of a Windows session. (You can drag the windows around, as you may have guessed). Here we've clicked on 'Military targets' in the Class Menu and have been treated to a sub-menu containing different types. Clicking on any of these (we've gone for 'Military Building') highlights their location(s) on the map. Orange equals enemy.

MAP FIVE

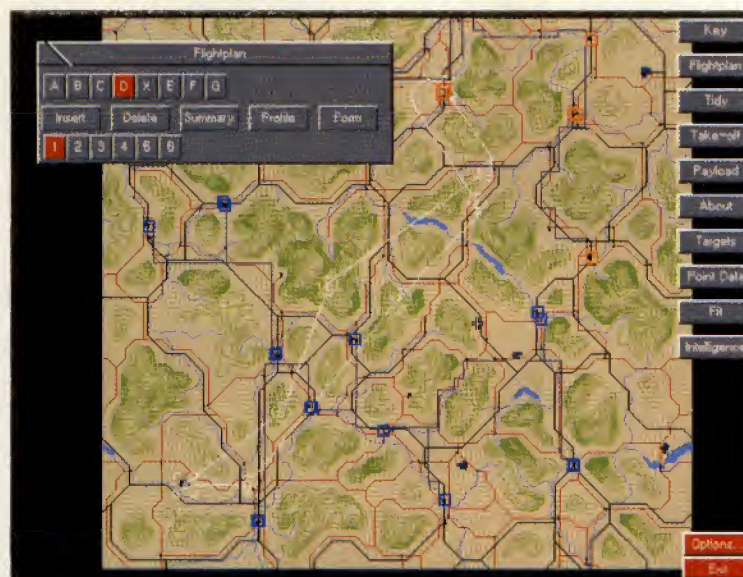
But that was just a 'for instance'. What we're really after is a baby-milk factory, so having highlighted







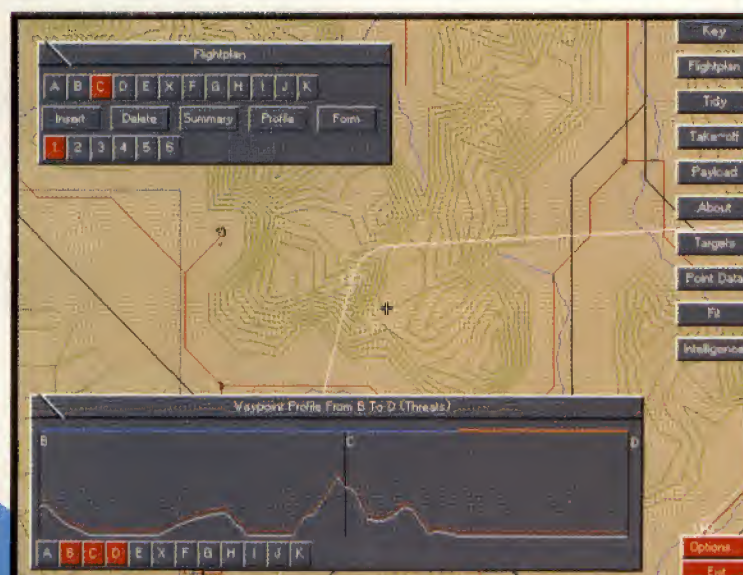
MAP SEVEN



MAP EIGHT



MAP NINE



MAP TEN



MAP ELEVEN



MAP TWELVE

the Large Light Industrial on the main map we click a likely looking unit and zoom in. Looks like the typical sort of place a baby-milk factory would be, doesn't it? So it's time to place your first waypoint... and with the easy-to-use *Tornado* map planning system it's a piece of cake: all you need is the Flight Plan Window. It's all looking very military now. No?

MAP SIX

Now it's time to change the waypoint into a target, so click on the relevant part of the menu to the right, and "blam" ... a totally serious looking new window pops onto the screen and makes the other windows look rather tame. Set the time of the attack. Set the type of weapon. Set everything, basically, and when you've finished you can move the windows around and get them into a sort of angular pattern. Then make a cup of tea.

MAP SEVEN

After the attack you'll be wanting to get back home, so click on a sensible position near your airfield and a second waypoint is placed - in the beam. You now have (A) takeoff, (X) target and (Y) approach waypoints fixed. See? In the Flight Plan Window. And something else you may notice that the waypoint line has a *curvy bit* on it. The computer has worked out your après attack turn radius. It varies according to your speed - as it most definitely should.

MAP EIGHT

But if you want your military chums to congratulate you on your mission planning skills, you're going to need more waypoints than that: anyone can set two, after all. Make the attack as complicated as you can, and use the hills to your advantage. Clear your mind, and draw a random shape on a piece of paper. Does it look good? Then copy it onto the map. Gasps of admiration are guaranteed... and placing new way points between existing ones is a doddle.

MAP NINE

How to check your route in profile. "In profile" you say? Too bloody right. It's in with the Ninja Window... and the Flight Plan Window is quite sensibly keeping a safe distance. At the moment the Ninja Window is showing you the uppy and downy bits of the *entire* route, from waypoints A through to G. It's a wraparound. The orange line shows enemy territory, the blue yours, and the yellow lines show the enemy radar coverage. (Duck under if you can).

MAP TEN

Some new waypoints have been added for effect, so it's back up with the Ninja Window. But this time, rather than the whole route, only waypoints B, C and D are highlighted. Yup, the profile view is effectively zoomed in - and you can plainly see that

waypoint C is right on top of a hill. The RAF reference book "Sensible Waypoint Placement" has a chapter entitled "Why You Don't Want Them On Hills If At All possible". Oh dear. Better plonk it in a valley then.

MAP ELEVEN

And now it's time to obscure the map almost completely with the largest and most ninjafied window of the lot: the Payload Loading Window. What bombs are you going to take? Where are you going to put them? How about some Air To Airs? That sort of stuff. In the Gulf War one Tornado pilot reached his target only to realise that he'd forgotten to load any weapons at all. He'd clicked on EXIT before visiting this screen, obviously. Prat.

MAP TWELVE

Falcon 3 had one, but it wasn't a patch on this... it's the Map Explore Mode. Click anywhere on the map and you'll find yourself in a weird flying camera with a top speed of 800 mph and a service ceiling of 10,000 feet. Have a long last look at your target from any angle you desire. You can even stick to the ground... just set your speed to about 13 mph, make sure you stay on the roads, and you can pretend you're a nun in an Austin Metro. Excellent.

So there you are. But we've only just brushed the surface: for instance, you can design comprehensive flight plans for not only your own aircraft, but for up to six other computer controlled Tornados. Think about it. With careful use of the Time Of Attack, Speed and Altitude commands you can co-ordinate things so that all seven members of your flight sweep across the target simultaneously - all from different directions. (And all at the same height too... just like the Italian Red Arrows did at a certain European air show in 1988). Silly you say? Fair enough, but even if you use just the one plane in sensible attacks, you'll still be crouched over the map till the wee small hours. In fact you may never even get around to taking off at all - although that'd be a mistake, because if you think the map and planning stages in *Tornado* look good, just wait until you see the rest of it. In other words tune into our review next month. ☑



(Above) A recent survey showed that faced with the decision between over, around or through, 98% of Tornado pilots favoured the latter option. (Bottom) That blue stuff looks flat. Maybe I should land on it.



WIN A COPY OF TORNADO

P C Zone and Digital Integration proudly present the 'I Want It First Competition'... the ten winners of this compo will each receive a copy of *Tornado* hot off the presses. In other words by the time the game reaches the shops, the winners will already own it.

All you have to do...

Study the storyboard and check out the Target Browser. The classes of target available are Civil/Industrial, POL, Transport, Military, Radar and Communications. Yes? Well, the question we're asking is simply this: What in the name of buggery does POL stand for? Use the coupon or copy it onto the back of a postcard and send your answer to I Want It First, PC Zone, 19 Bolsover Street, W1P 7HJ. The winners' names will be printed somewhere on the *Tornado* Review pages next month, so get your skates on.

POL stands for:

NAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

Blueprint

Starfighter Ace

PUBLISHER: Mirage

PRICE: tba

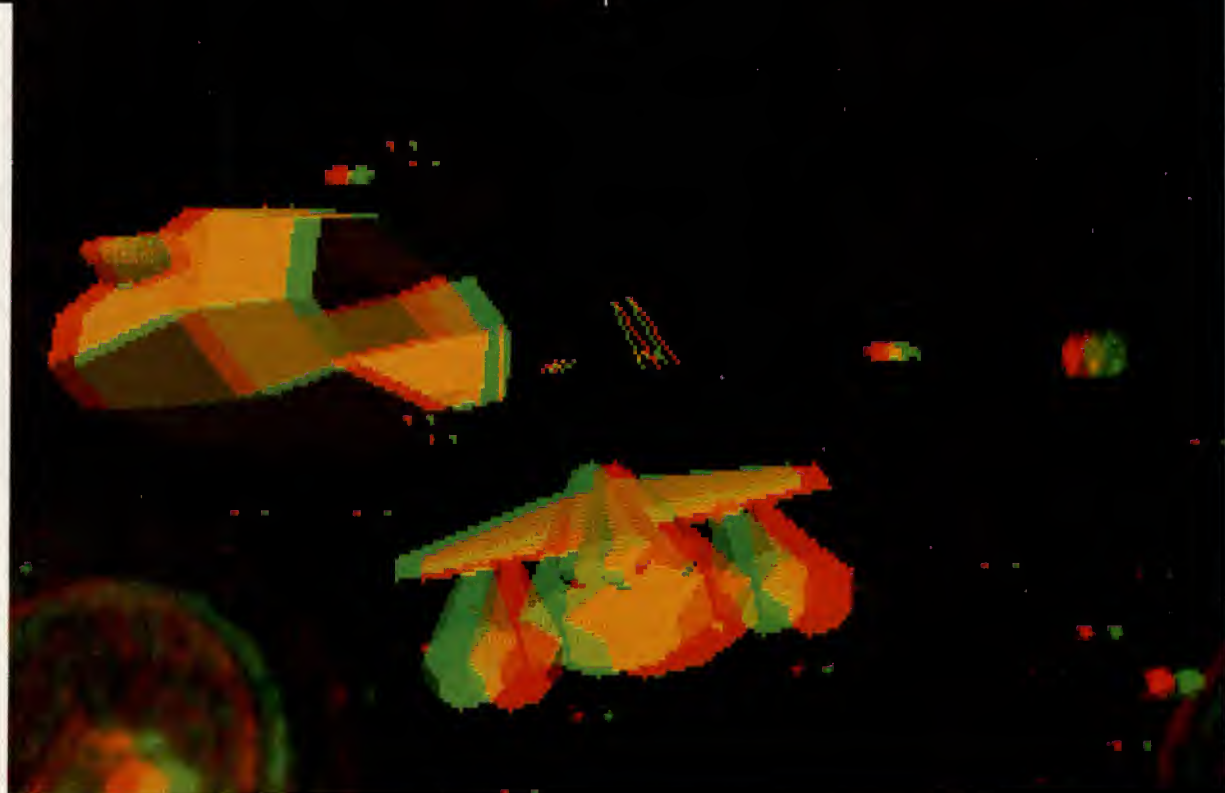
TELEPHONE: 0260 299909

OUT: April



It's programmed by
Maelstrom. It's 3-D.
It's a space-based
shoot' em-up.
And it's clever.
That's all you need
to know. You can
work the rest out
from the screen
shots and **David
McCandless** can
go home.

(Above) This is a monochrome shot of the game action which looks pale in contrast to... (Right) The weird and wonderful 3D shot. Mind you, you need 3D glasses to really appreciate it.



H

ave you ever been to a place where "chromatic aberration", "dynamic modifier" and "stereoscopic" are the smallest words in conversations? I have. It's called 'The Office Of Maelstrom' and it's in Liverpool. This office, with its in-house genius, Mike

Singleton, has produced some very big games, with the word 'revolutionary' and 'excellent' on the packaging. You've probably heard of *MidWinter* and *Ashes Of The Empire*. If you haven't then you should've. Both games were stuffed with fractals, strategy, depth of gameplay, huge playing areas, and mind-bending maths, and probably created a rash of 'computer widows' up and down the country.

So, those 'computer widows', just now reconciling themselves to a *menage à trois* with their partner and the PC, will be glad to hear that Maelstrom's latest title, *Starfighter Ace*, contains no fractals nor strategy, very shallow gameplay, an average playing area, and "relatively simple" maths. It's a polygon-based shoot 'em-up, with the normal sci-fi codswallop plot and a fairly average set of missions.

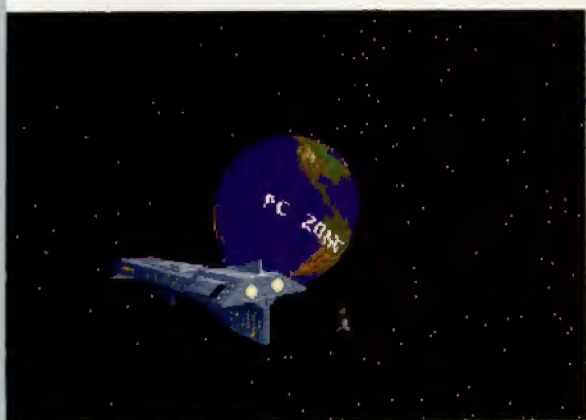
"Why are you being so damning so early in the preview?" you ask. "If it's so average then why give it 3 pages?" Well if you'd shut up for a minute, I'd be able to tell to you. We're making a fuss about the game, because it's not normal 3D. This is not a poor-man's forced isometric. This is the real thing, the real stereoscopic reaching-out-of-the-monitor, ducking and diving 3D.

What?

'Stereoscopic' is the term which went alongside all those crap 50's B-movies, like *Teenage Virgin Things From The Party Planet* (1953) and *It Came Dressed For Dinner* (1958), which used two images (one blue, one red) to deceive a pair of eyes wearing a pair of blue and red lensed glasses, that they were about to have a dead alien topple off a stairway, through the film and into their lap. Of course all this meant for film was more aliens falling from stairways and more fingers/knives/poles poked at the camera. The pointy objects poked. The audiences

CLEVERNESS 1

The playing area is a clever mixture of standard filled-polygons, mainly alien ships, space junk, and scaled solid bitmaps such as asteroids and explosions. The asteroids are stored in medium size and then shrunk or expanded by 40% in game. A special real time 'dithering' routine produces a realistic fading explosion effect, so the blasts need only be stored as one image.



CLEVERNESS 2

The goal of each mission is to reach a new planet where you are debriefed. Cue the clever rotating planet effect. It's a flat D-paint image wrapped mathematically round a globe effect in real time. The 'PC ZONE' scrawled unartistically on Africa will probably not appear in the finished game.



CLEVERNESS 3

Earth: 2021. In the wink of an eye, the planet can be instantly 'greenhoused'. Our fair and noble globe is turned into a smelting pot of frying gasses and carbon dioxide. Our perverted morals and inability to turn into God have reduced our planet into clinker. (Sermon © David Icke, 1992)



THE MISSIONS

The Storm

A huge storm of meteorites and space junk lies between you and your mother ships. The space junk – bits of battleships, space radars and fragments of the Astra satellites – is bulleting towards you at an unnecessary speed. You must dodge and blast a clear path through before the time limit expires.

Hide And Seek

Enemy fighters have moored themselves in a space-station's 'car park'. You have to zoom around, avoiding the goodies' ships and cargo containers, whilst cleansing the parking places with your laser deathbolts. Tight manoeuvrability is essential.

The Chase

A convoy of evil alien ships are trying to elude you by hiding their cowardly alien behinds in the middle of an asteroid field. You have to plummet through the asteroids, making several laser death-passes at the alien ships until they're space junk.

Sneak Attack

A huge orbiting mothership is threatening to bring a squadron of super fighters into the solar system. You must engage its defences and somehow manage to get inside and destroy the alien craft before they are scrambled.

The Kamikazes

A flotilla of suicidal aliens are deliberately trying to collide with you. That and a ton of space junk. Your mother ship is some way off, but it's your only escape.

PROFILE

(Top to Bottom) Flight commander McCandless launches into space and reveals his legendary ability to destroy polygon-based space craft.

The Accelerator

A sort of 3D space slalom this one. A long series of stargates in spiral formation have to be flown through to push you towards light speed. Look out for space debris.

The Space Station

A massive enemy space-base is under construction on the outermost fringe of the galaxy. You must make several penetrations into its unshielded, tunnelled interior until she blows. A 'few' enemy fighters will try to 'take you out' inside.

The Missile Attack

Your ship is armed with a limited number of fly-by-wire missiles. On firing, the missile camera takes over, leaving you to steer the high speed missile to its target. Of course, there's a dab of space junk here and there.

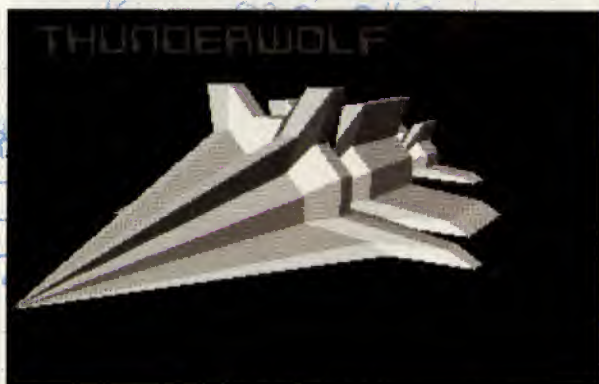
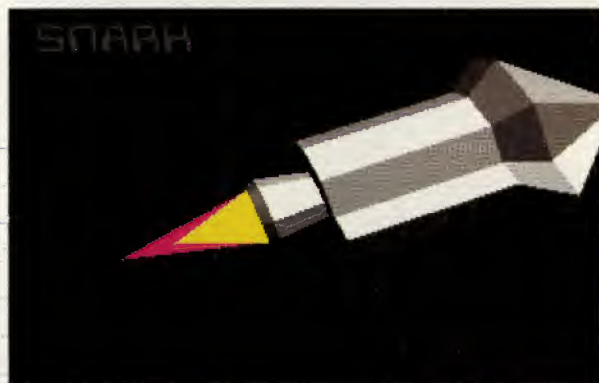
The Squadron

You control three ships at once in your attack on a massive enemy fleet flying in formation. But the more alien ships you destroy, the more space junk appears.

The Rescue

You have to tow a crippled ship through a space junk storm. Your weapons' power is drained by the tow. And if you turn too sharply the tow breaks. Very difficult.

"The 3D effect will make you drool. It works so well."



(Left) Some suitably polygon-looking and frighteningly named space ships.

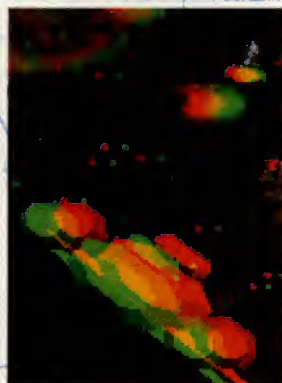
gasped - and then everyone got bored and the whole effect sadly died out.

But *Teenage Virgin Things* is still remembered by a few people (most people who could remember it are thankfully dead). It has even inspired an attempt by some of the modern computer generation to resurrect the stereo technique and the stupid glasses on the PC (i.e. Mike Singleton and the Maelstrom team).

Action packing

Does this mean we'll be seeing toppling stairway aliens in 3D SVGA? "Nope," replies Mike. "This is a high-end consumer product. A straight shoot 'em up." The emphasis is being placed on the replacing of "fancy strategy" with out-and-out action packing, avoiding *Elite*'s trading elements with more *Wing Commander*-style death dealing. The moment you start the game you're flung into a mass of moving objects - asteroids and space junk - which hurtle towards you at an incredible pace. "This is the slow version," they tell me smugly as I die instantly. "Do you want to see the fast one?" I have to decline since I've run out of saliva to drool insanely onto the carpet in amazement.

The 3D effect will make you drool. It works so well. Your ship sits in the middle of the screen and the stereoscopic



effects makes the objects seem as if they're coming at you from at least six feet away. The fact that you're in control, rather than watching a sad orchestrated toppling alien, means you are instantly convinced by the 3D effect and cannot stop monitor-ducking. (Chronic ducking and weaving of the head while playing computer games - Definition. Ed.) It was embarrassing enough with Microprose *Grand Prix*, but

now you're ducking and swearing whilst sporting a pair of stupid 3D glasses.

The game uses the outside view because "it orchestrates close-up action, widens the player's view and gives a greater depth of 3D," Mike says. "Also, the ship becomes a yardstick for distance. So it's easier to judge distances." Manoeuvrability is all important and with over 50 objects streaking towards you at at least 25 frames per second, if you don't have a good joystick, you're doomed.

You obviously can't get any impression of how good this 3D effect is from the mono shots on these pages, but don't let *Jaws 3D* and *Teenage Virgins* affect your idea of stereo 3D. At the moment the game is about 75 percent complete, and is toppling from a stairway towards an early April release. Is this going to be the 'new' big thing, or just another *Jaws 3D*? Read the verdict next issue to find out. ☒

CLEVERNESS 4

Starfighter Ace avoids the poncey 'Gouraud' shading, preferring just simple light sourced polygons. In the old days, however, a shaded object with say, 260 faces, would require 10K of memory. These days, at Maelstrom HQ, vector drawn objects with 260 faces can be popped in a mere 100 bytes of memory. They're just drawn out on graph paper as 'points'. The PC takes the points and joins the dots at high speed.

CLEVERNESS 5

Mission commanders used to be digitised faces with a Pinocchio-style chin, mouthing to a printed text message. Nowadays we have a vector-plotting mission chief, drawn with 4000 small vectors and stored as simple equations. He turns his head. He speaks (realistically). He can have a bigger chin, nose, forehead or mouth just by changing a single number. Clever.



Pick a card. But not just any card.

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So when the cards are on the table, you know the one to choose.



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CREATIVE TECHNOLOGY LTD

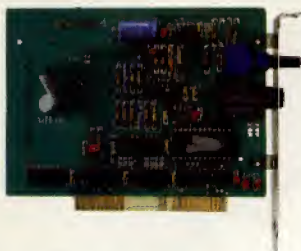


WESTPOINT CREATIVE

Software included dependent on product: Lemmings, INDI 500, Creative Wave Studio, Creative Talking Scheduler, Creative Mosaic, Voice Utilities, SB Talker with Doctor Sbalitso, FM Intelligent Organ, Talking Parrot, MMPLAY Presenter, Jukebox for Windows 3.1, Monologue for Windows, PC Animate Plus, Midisoft Recording Sessions, HSC Interactive, Software Toolworks Multimedia Encyclopedia (CD-ROM)

Delta House, 264 Monkmoor Road, Shrewsbury SY2 5ST Tel: 0743 248590 Fax: 0743 248199 Bulletin Board: 0743 360287

AD-LIB MUSIC CARD



THE GRANDFATHER of the soundboard world has spawned many rivals, one child and many imitations. We'd like to say 'pale imitations' but the sad truth is that most modern cards far outshine this 1987 model. It's not redundant though. It has by far the largest software support, stretching back into the days when PCs were for people who wore cardigans and leather espadrilles. For this reason any golden oldie purchase (eg *Indianapolis 500* or *Populous*) plus an *Ad-Lib* can sound modern and hip today.

Techy speccy

If the *Ad-Lib* is the standard of the PC soundboard world, the Yamaha YMF262 Frequency Modulation chip is the silicon equivalent. They're cheap (about £8.50), built by oriental labour overseas, and very cute. The sound they produce can be politely termed 'acceptable'. The *Ad-Lib* has one, pushing out 11 mono instruments or sound effects at once. It has no DAC

chip, so digitisation is out of the running. A large jack socket and a sensitive volume control provides access for speakers or 'cans'.

Installation

The 8-bit card slotted neatly in the expansion port with no ill effects.

Software

Ad-Lib's packaging is minimalist, containing a small DOS driver and a fairly naff Jukebox program. Most games use their own drivers, so there's no faffing about with installation or CONFIG.

Games Attack

Every game in our cupboard supports *Ad-Lib*, most providing title tunes and in-game music. *Tinny* is the first word which comes to mind, followed by 'synthy' and 'not very bassy'. Quite a reasonable range of instruments on offer - piano, trumpets, guitar, drums - just about summoning enough atmosphere for games like *Underworld II* and *The Summoning*, but they sound like the 'rocking' covers inflicted on you in supermarkets.

Sound effects, while producing adequate explosions, gun shots, and the chuka-chuka of gun ship rotors, lack the 'pazzaz' of digitised SFX. The lack of digitised speech takes the techno edge off games like *Wing Commander II* and *Stunt Island*.

MUSIC	6
SFX	5
INSTALLATION	9
SOFTWARE	4

Price: £199.00

Zye Technology, Unit 2, Alpine Works,
Oak Road, Crawley, West Sussex RH11 8AJ
Telephone: 0293 538 666

SOUND BLASTER 2.0



TOUTED AS "the new *Ad-Lib*" and "the industry standard", *Sound Blaster* cards started the rush towards sampling and digitised speech in PC games. Its early pole position in the market resulted in a huge software base. It also started the games trend of huge intros packed with characters mouthing voice samples. It's only just beginning to show its age, but updated versions (1.5 and 2.0) plus new marketing pitches (*Sound Blaster Pro* supports CD-ROM drives) will guarantee its standard for ooh, let me see, at least two more years.

Techy speccy

Say hello to the lovely YMF262 chip again. Yep, *Sound Blaster* is fully *Ad-Lib*able (so no real advancement in music), but it does have an 8-bit DAC chip on board to cope admirably with digitised sound effects. It also has a joystick/MIDI port, a small jacked speaker out, volume dial, and microphone/line-in sockets.

Installation

The installation was hassle free. However, if the default IRQ and DMA ports clash with existing hardware, (esoteric mouse drivers or scanning equipment) you'll have to enter the mysterious and fraught world of

'jumpers'. These tiny, very loseable, black lumps of circuitry have to be physically relocated on the board with nimble fingers. This is very frightening for *Mr.Cursors*, but is rarely necessary.

Software

Interesting array of programs here. *SBTALKER* is a text-to-speech synthesiser, capable of reading ASCII files and installable into your favourite word processor. So you can have your prose read out by a voice sounding like a Bulgarian British RA announcer with a bad head cold doing an impression of a Dalek through a rolled-up newspaper. *TALKING PARROT* is an annoying little demo which shows off the card's speech capabilities. *INTELLIGENT ORGAN* turns your keyboard into a musical instrument. Auto accompaniment is possible, and MIDI is supported. *VOX KIT* is a sampling program, enabling you to digitise yourself giggling or making farting noises into a microphone. The Deluxe Version of Version 2 comes with *Indy 500* and *Lemmings*.

Games Attack

The difference a *Sound Blaster* card can make to your games playing is legendary. The *Links 386 Pro* commentary never sounded so clear and smug, and the *Underworld* intro so out-of-sync. Explosions sound like explosions. Gun shots sound like proper gun shots and not like someone eating a peanut.

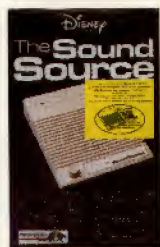
MUSIC	6
SFX	8
INSTALLATION	8
SOFTWARE	6

Price: £104.58

Westpoint Creative, Delta House,
264 Monkmoor Road, Shrewsbury,
Shropshire SY2 5ST
Telephone: 0743 248590

Wired For

THE SOUND SOURCE



MAINLY PITCHED at Disney educational and kids products, *The Sound Source* has limited appeal and support for adults, but without it the majority of Disney games are pretty unremarkable.

Techy speccy

It's basically an 8-bit DAC chip in a white box with a volume control, which connects to your printer port, without any internal surgery whatsoever. It has a no music option, and samples are sent directly from the software. The quality depends entirely on the game, but most FX sound fine.

Installation

Very simple. Just slot the connector into your parallel port. A huge problem, however, arises if you have a mouse port above your

parallel; *The Source's* connector is too bulky to co-exist with a mouse connector. So the mouse has to go.

Software

The Source is packaged sans software of any type. You won't get a peep from the box until compatible software is loaded.

Games Attack

Any Disney game will support *The Source*. *Hare Rising Havoc* is hilarious with it, but boring without. Some broad minded modern software (including *Wolfenstein 3D* and *Alone In The Dark*) supports it, but most are not interested.

MUSIC	0
SFX	7
INSTALLATION	5
SOFTWARE	0
Price: £35.99	
Infogrames UK, 18A Old Town, Clapham, London SW4 0LB	
Telephone: 071 738 8199	

SOUND BLASTER 16 ASP



THE BIG GUNS of the soundcard world are the 16-bit cards. You'll pay through the nose but you'll certainly get every penny's worth. The *Sound Blaster 16 ASP* offers CD quality audio and is mainly pitched at professional 'spods' and their 'board rooms'. The odd incredibly rich gameplayers should not be discouraged though. *Sound Blaster 16* offers full *Sound Blaster* compatibility. 16-bit cards are the future of PC sound although they are still very pricey.

Techy speccy

Boasts a full enhanced 4 operator 20 voice OPL3 stereo FM music synthesiser chip – a souped up FMF262 basically. Sounds are produced by combining a 12-bit DAC chip with the old FM style for a much fuller, more realistic effect. 16-bit samples essentially are the ultimate in sound quality, but most games use 8-bit samples (they're smaller) so apart from a noticeable crispness to the FX, there's nothing too revolutionary for gamers. A CD-ROM

interface is included on board for that future purchase.

Installation

The board glided effortlessly into our tower PC. But our venerable old desk top models refused to accept the card. The metal back plate was about two millimetres too long. We actually had to physically bend the end slightly to get it in (this problem re-occurred with nearly all the cards).

Software

The package is very professional and full of yuppy toys. *WAVESTUDIO* is a professional sampling studio, with a full range of cutting, pasting and effect processing. *MOSAIC* is a small show off puzzle game. *SOUNDOLLE* enables you to place samples in Windows documents (for presentations). *TALKING SCHEDULER* is a filofax which speaks to you. *HSC INTERACTIVE* and *PC ANIMATE PLUS* together allow you to prepare spiffing 'films' and slide shows. It's all Windows based, well documented, and runs alongside existing *Creative Sound Blaster* software which are also included in the deal.

Games attack

The main advantage for games comes with the advanced FM chip and potential 16-bit quality samples. As yet there are no games supporting the 16 directly, but it's only a matter of time. If you're after sound improvement minus the professional angle your best bet is *Sound Blaster Pro* which is a mid-way between Version 2.0 and the 16 ASP.

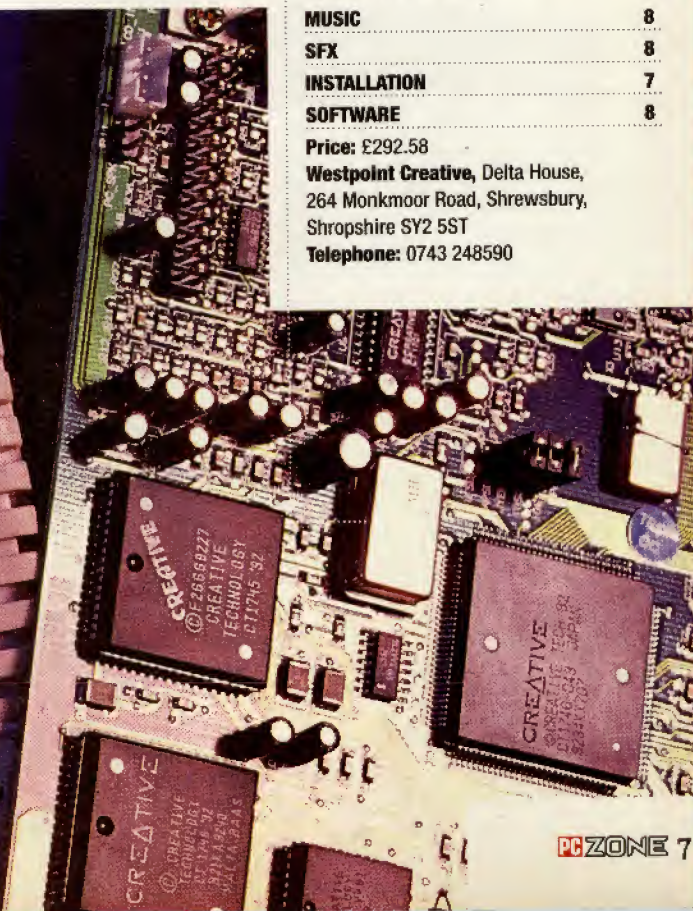
MUSIC	8
SFX	8
INSTALLATION	7
SOFTWARE	8
Price: £292.58	
Westpoint Creative, Delta House, 264 Monkmoor Road, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY2 5ST	
Telephone: 0743 248590	

So it might be a bit of an obvious first feature but we fancied blagging a few Sound Cards and **David McCandless** fancied showing off his knowledge of the world of sound.

Let's skip the boring history of sound on the PC. Let's skip trying to describe what a PC sounds like without a Sound Card. Let's – refreshingly some might say – just delve straight into the reviews...

Sound

The Sound Source



CYONIX SOUND TRAX TRIO



BASICALLY A repackage of the American Aztec Sound Galaxy NX, an extremely versatile soundcard, compatible with *Ad-Lib*, *Sound Blaster*, *Covox Speech Thing* and *The Sound Source*. It's pitched totally at games players, and is compatible with virtually every single game in the Western world.

Techy speccy

As well as the eponymous YMF262 wonder-chip, the *Trio* contains an 8-bit DAC and an array of microphone and speaker ins and outs, as well as a joystick cum MIDI adaptor port. Also, and rather importantly, a CD-ROM port for when multi-media eventually catches on. Apart from these impressive bits, it's basically quite unremarkable.

Installation

Simple pimple. Except for the back plate problem which again required minute use of force. The software is unpacked from two discs and takes up little hard disk space (2 Mb).

Software

Trio comes bundled with a hit and miss collection of programs. *MONOLOGUE* is another ASCII read Dalek simulator for bored people. *GALAXY MASTER*, a sound sampler, can record your favourite film snippets and save them in .wav or .voc formats (for Windows). *NOTEPLAY* is a kiddies music learning game. *PLAY BY EAR* is a strange audible learning system, totally inaccessible for the tone deaf and indeed, the deaf. But best of all is the brilliant *BAND IN A BOX*, which allows you to compose your own chord based 'opuses', and play them in loads of styles such as Raggaie, Jazz, Funk, Blues, Rock and even Fusion. Hours of fun.

Games attack

Games sound and quality relies entirely on the compatibility options. *Sound Blaster* is perfect, while *The Sound Source* is dodgy, with hissing and lisping speech. But if you've got a huge software catalogue just begging to be revitalised then it can't really be faulted.

MUSIC	6
SFX	8
INSTALLATION	7
SOFTWARE	8
Price: £129.95	
Cyonix PLC , Commerce Way, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, England LU7 8SU	
Telephone: 0525 850025	

SOUND PRODUCER PRO



THE BIG step up from the YMF262 chip and true 16-bit quality stuff is filled by cards like the *Orchid Sound Producer Pro*. Full compatibility with industry standards (*Ad-Lib*, *Sound Blaster* etc), SCSI CD-ROM interface, enhanced FM synth - the whole caboodle. All for just under £200.

Techy speccy

Alright! Alright! it's got a bloody YMF262 chip, but with an enhanced 20 voice 4 operator stereo edge to it. It's also got the usual 3.5mm stereo jack input/output and SCSI (Small Computer System Interface) for your new CD-ROM. It can sample up to 44.1KHz in mono, 22.05KHz stereo.

Installation

Barring the annoying 'bending of the back plate' scenario, it's all very easy.

Software

The usual hit'n'miss variety of applications. *MONOLOGUE* rather uselessly reads your test files. *WINDAT* is a Windows-based sampling system; simple and useful for putting your voice saying, "Welcome to Windows" on your startup. Jukebox can queue

.wav files, MIDI files and CD tracks in explosive sound concert. *CD-PLAYER* brilliantly multi-tasks your CD-ROM drive, so you can play *The Police* while being them in *Police Quest II*. *SOUNDTRAKS*, to quote the press release, plays "a range of melody songs for your pleasant listening". Try "a range of awful songs to be turned off after a minimum of 3 seconds." They're bloody awful.

Games attack

All round compatibility means all round noise pollution. There were no problems with games. *The Orchid Card* did the rounds on *Falcon 3.0*, *Shadowlands* and *Star Control 2* and responded with good sound quality and reasonable music quality. A problem can occur when compatibility demands a driver in memory. This can gobble your base RAM if you don't have reasonable EMS or XMS.

MUSIC	8
SFX	8
INSTALLATION	8
SOFTWARE	6
Price: £186.83	
Orchid , Unit 5 Cartel Business Centre, Stroudley Road, Basingstoke, Hants RG24 0UG	
Telephone: 0256 479 898	

WE RECKON...

Which soundcard you buy depends entirely on you. On your system set-up. On your money. On your games habits. And on the tolerance of the people in your house. Here's a few stereotypes.

READER 1

"I am an amateur musician and I dig the idea that you can play games and do music on the PC. So, I'm really looking for a card that works most excellently with all games and that I can compose my seminal pop masterpieces on and play them to my friend."

Try: **Cyonix Sound Producer Trio**

READER 2

"I am thick, thick - thick! I am also poor. I bought my PC 'cheap' off a 'friend'. I am the best game player in the world, and when I play a game, I really like to play a game. When I shoot an alien I want to hear it scream. And when I fall down a lava pit in *Underworld* I want to hear me scream."

Try: **Sound Blaster v2.0**

GRAVIS ULTRASOUND



ANOTHER Canadian board that, although big in America, is yet to catch on this side of the pond.

Software support is beginning to filter through – Chuck Yeager's *Air Combat* was the only game we could find which supported it directly. Its impressive specs and reasonably affordable price may bring it into market contention for 1993.

Techy speccy

The techs, as I said, are extremely impressive. It has 16-bit playback capability (although only 8-bit record) and its own 32 voice custom sound chip, which combines 256K on board RAM and wave table synthesis for very realistic quality sounds, ranging from choirs and organs through to pianos and pan-pipes. It's also *Ad-Lib* and *Sound Blaster* compatible, which can't be bad.

Installation

Slotting it in was easy as pi. The software, which came on 6 disks, took 30 minutes. Sound was

blaring out of the speakers in the 31st minute.

Software

Some not-very-friendly-but-still-quite-impressive software accompanies the board. Most are messy DOS based drivers and demos, which reproduce all sorts of loud destructive noises, as well as some lovely airy drawing room music – Bach and such like. *STUDIO 8* is a mouse driven sampling environment which is powerful but annoying to use.

Games attack

As yet, not too many games on the Gravis horizon, but compatibility should keep it going while the software companies catch up. *Chuck Yeager* sounded brilliant and suitably noisy, and the quality was maintained when we ran the board as *Sound Blaster*. Software drivers may gobble up your RAM.

MUSIC	8
SFX	9
INSTALLATION	8
SOFTWARE	6
Price: £209.99	
Gravis UK, Rayner House, 23 Higher Hillgate, Stockport, Cheshire SK1 3ER	
Telephone: 061 429 6028	

MEDIAVISION FUSION CD 16



IT'S THE AGE of new technology, CD-ROM, multimedia and virtual reality, so here's a quick

appraisal of CD-ROM packs. The Fusion combines MediaVision's 16-bit sound card, a 'fast' Sony internal CD-ROM drive, two speakers, and some impressive games as one full, no-strings, up-grade pack.

Techy speccy

The soundcard is a neat 16-bit card with – you've guessed it – a YMF262 synth chip for 'Ad-Libness', but with advanced 20 voice bits. It's also *Sound Blaster* compatible and Windows runnable. The CD-ROM drive slots into your spare disk slot and can store 558 low-density 3.5 disk on one CD (that's a lot). The back plate holds a MIDI/joystick port and the usual audio ins and outs.

Installation

For the uninitiated, the installation could be a nightmare. Not only do

you have to dissect your PC, you'll also have to screw in the drive, connecting SCSI, audio and power cables. The manual is a bit clinical but informative and even *Mr. Cursor* could manage it if he concentrated. Once in, it runs instantly.

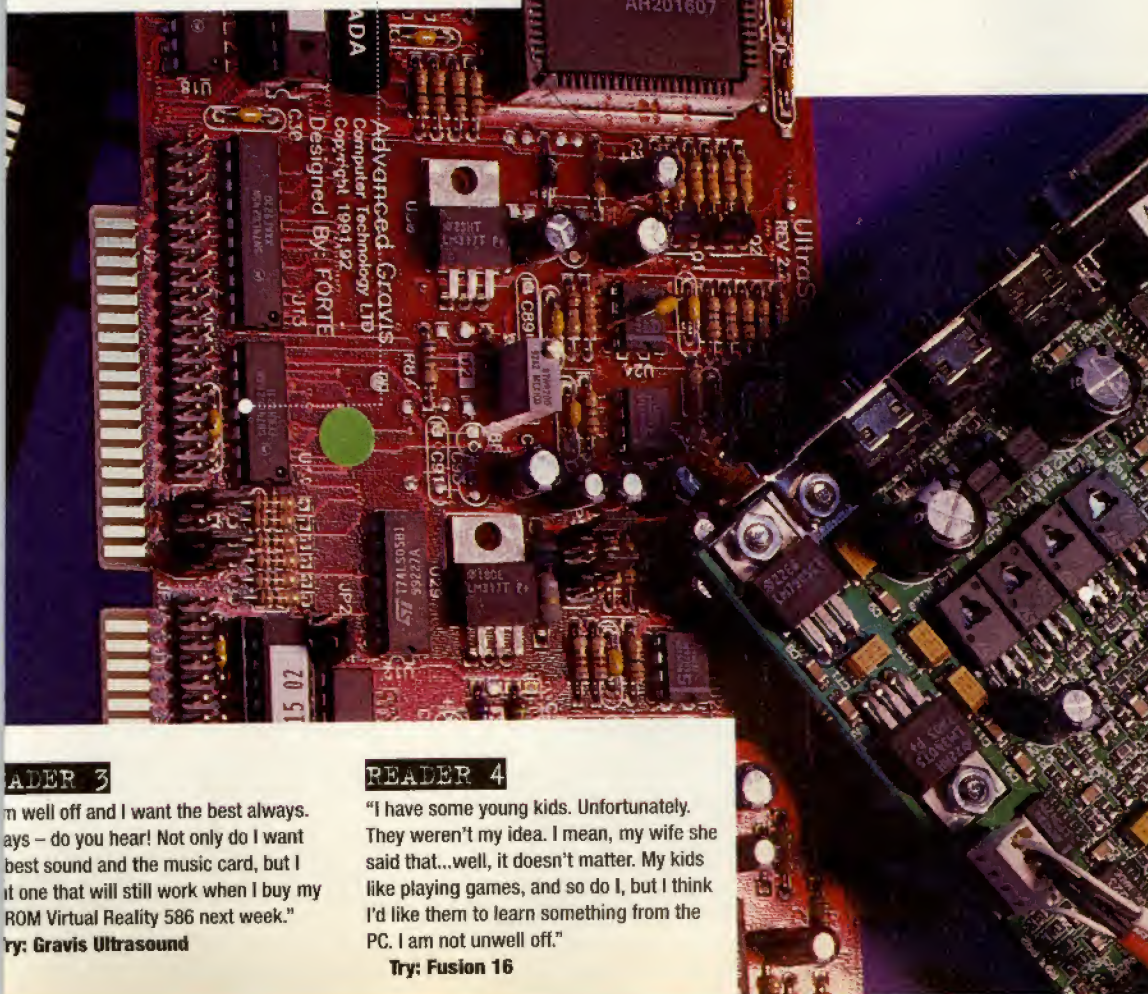
Software

A very impressive selection of the joys of software awaits you in the box. *Comptons Encyclopedia (With Atlas)* is a nice but ultimately boring addition to your games shelf. *Ultima Underworld* and *Wing Commander II* are basically nigh on faultless for computer entertainment. The CD version of *Carmen Sandiego* is much better than the disk version. There are also a broad selection of Windows-based apps, allowing you to mix synth and CD sounds, sample your voice at 44,000 different wavelengths, and also play music CDs during games.

Games attack

The *Sound Blaster/Ad-Lib* supports means that most games are ready to be noisy for you. And you can now plunder the growing stock of multimedia games and products.

MUSIC	7
SFX	8
INSTALLATION	6
SOFTWARE	10
Price: £399.95	
MediaVision, Datronch Plc, Datronch House, 42-44 Birchett Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 1LU	
Telephone: 0252 313 155	



PC ZONE
RECOMMENDED

Your best bet for a cheap, all singing, all dancing, hassle free sound card is to seek out the *Sound Galaxy NX* or *NX Pro* for an independent retailer. You can get them from between 90 (NX) and 120 (NX Pro)

READER 3

"I'm well off and I want the best always. I want the best sound and the music card, but I want one that will still work when I buy my ROM Virtual Reality 586 next week."

Try: Gravis Ultrasound

READER 4

"I have some young kids. Unfortunately. They weren't my idea. I mean, my wife she said that...well, it doesn't matter. My kids like playing games, and so do I, but I think I'd like them to learn something from the PC. I am not unwell off."

Try: Fusion 16

Blueprint

Litil Divil

PUBLISHER: Gremlin

PRICE: tba

TELEPHONE: (0742) 753 423

OUT: April

A brave hero fighting for truth, justice and the fairer sex or just a horny Litil Divil?



The ever-so-slightly satanic **Pav** **Lakin** sets off to Gremlin to find out what the Hell's going on with *Litil Divil* and what's gone wrong with their Spellcheck.



HELL GETS A BAD press but is it really so bad? Think of all the wild parties you could go to, all the interesting people you'd get to meet. And it would be warm. Not like Heaven where you'd have to sit around listening to Aled Jones albums and watching endless reruns of Songs of Praise. No, I know where I'd prefer to be. Unless of course God got clever and sent all the people who'd enjoy Hell to Heaven and vice versa. That's the problem with Gods, they're so omniscient.

"This is hell nor am I out of it"

Mind you if a visit to the underworld is combined with transformation from an intrepid, if unsuccessful, explorer into a long horned, winged and jowled divil then you're

"In most games when you go round a corner the screen just flicks, in *Litil Divil* you actually go round the corner"

perhaps going to be a tad cheesed off, however good and kickin' the party is. Ugly and illiterate talk about a rough deal.

The little divil has ended up in this state through drinking something he shouldn't (which is just what

the vicar always said would happen) and dabbling in stone tablets and hieroglyphics. Only another drink from another well can return him to his previous form in his own world. The expression that springs to mind is hair of the dog.

Conveniently this restorative well is set right on the other side of the Underworld. I think the expression is town planning. As everyone knows Hell has seven levels (or circles) to it. Well it did in Dante's day. Gremlin's underworld has five levels; more bloody government cut backs. Mind you five is more than enough when they're crammed with such horror.

Tunnel vision

Each of the levels consist of ten or so rooms all linked together by a maze of tunnels. (Except one level which is one large room containing a network of stone pathways joined at various points by towers.) The tunnels are not intended to be a breather between rooms but will probably contain as many hazards and rewards as the rooms themselves.

Such delights as spikes, shooting heads, flame pits and water pits are currently filling the development teams' minds. Of course there'll be the odd bonus to stumble across too, most bizarre of which are the X Spots. Stand on one of these and potions, special objects or even a Grand piano (I kid you not) fall from the ceiling.

Corporate Monster

Everyone needs a hero and software companies are no different to anyone else in this. They all want their own Mario, Sonic or Robocod. Gremlin already have Zool but the hero of *Litil Divil*, (kennel name is Meredith Axel-Ansell Dopolopagu known to his friend and those without time on their hands as Mad Medi) could shape up to serious marketability. Bad tempered, impatient and violent; a real icon for the nineties.





Room with a viewpoint

There are approximately 40 rooms in *Lital Divil* (Ten per level on four of the levels) and they basically fall into two categories; puzzle or violence.



This is a sketched out idea of the sort of puzzle room you might come up against. A woman is tied to a bench, above her is a scythe which swings backwards and forwards above her. With each swing it gets lower and closer towards extending her parting all the way down her body. There's a chasm

between you and her plus some ropes that raise stepping stones in the chasm. Your mission (if you decide to accept it) is to work out the correct sequence of rope pulls in time to cross the chasm and rescue the girl. All very *James Bond*, except that you don't look anything like Sean Connery so your chances of spending a few hours rolling about on a four poster bed with the grateful girl are virtually nil.

Chamber of lost souls

At the end of each level will be the moment of reckoning. There are a number of cells, each containing an unfortunate prisoner who needs a gift from you (Strangely not a Get Out Of Jail Free card) These gifts will have been your reward for clearing the various rooms. If you haven't collected something for each prisoner then it's back into that level of hell to get it. Prison visiting isn't all it's cracked up to be.

Death becomes him

In theory you shouldn't be able to lose in *Lital Divil* since, traditionally in a game you lose by dying. If you're already in the Underworld then you're dead. (Unless someone's been a bit lax with the checking procedures again). So you can't die. So you can't lose. Smart. Sounds like my kind of game.

No such luck. You're trailed round Hell by the Entity, who's rather like one of those people you can't get rid of at parties. As your energy gets lower the Entity gets closer until, as you hit zero, he strikes and drags you off to the torture chamber for a 'good going over'. Mind you some people (usually Judges or Tory MPs) are into that kind of thing and might regard this as a special winners' bonus.

Hellzapopin

Rome wasn't built in a day, so it's not surprising that the underworld has taken a little longer. Gremlin started working on *Lital Divil* towards the end of 1991 and it's only now reaching completion. The project is an ambitious one, using the same amount of memory as *Wing Commander*, "and really using it" claim the Irish based development team. This is largely due to the sheer volume of graphics and high standard of animation involved. An example of this is what happens when you go round corners. "In most games when you go round a corner the screen just flicks, In *Lital Divil* you actually go round the corner." Of course this is "just fluff and not important to gameplay" but it's things like that that add to the atmosphere of a game. There's also plenty that isn't 'just fluff' as you can see from the pictures here. If the gameplay is anywhere as good as the graphics *Lital Divil* could be devilishly good. (Oh dear). ☒

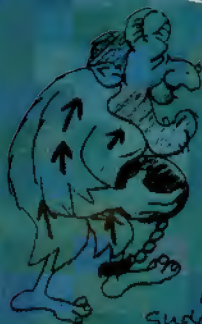


Monster Mayhem

There's many a slip between cup and lip. There's also many a slip between sketch and screen. Here are some of the Designers' roughs for monsters that look set to appear in *Lital Divil*. Nice looking bunch aren't they?



Purple piranha
nibbles bits off Mutt and little devil can only regain his lost limbs by killing fish.



Ball & Chain
Whenever convict touches Mutt, ball & chain is transferred to Mutt & drains his energy for specified length of time. He could pop up suddenly anywhere - no watch out!



The Stamp
Has very bad sight & stamps about indiscriminately. If he stands Mutt, bad news.



Snake
Very Creaky run & Mutt one & to pro turn. But kill in avoid. See. Or have. Re. Both. Pec.



Doing the 'monster mash'.



Hmm, it's nice, just not quite Art Deco enough.



Ow! Witch one of you spiked the Chilli? (Sorry).



Ah Mr Lamont I presume.



That's the last time I get those cowboy builders in.



Mother you've been at the steroids again.

FAMOUS FOR VALUE IN MICRO COMPUTERS

THRIPPLEWOODS

A member of the P & P group of Companies

THUNDER BOARD FOR WINDOWS

This amazing product allows you to experience the excitement of the latest in digitised sounds on your PC. Simply drop the sound card into your computer, select Thunder Board from the Windows menu and you're on your way!!

FEATURES

11 VOICE FM MUSIC SYNTHESISER

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Whether you're having problems installing a game, there are flames leaping from the insides of your hard drive or you have

any other questions about PCs, Mark Burgess is the man to write to. This page is not only for technical queries. You can ask all those things that you've wondered about for years, but have been afraid to ask. No one will sneer at you if you don't know what DOS stands for. Honest.

Definition Is This

WHAT DOES DOS STAND FOR?

J. Conrad, Greenwich

Disk Operating System, dingbat. MB.

Speeding Mice

I HAVE AN Amstrad 2086 and when I use the mouse, some programs run slower than on my friends' - similar - machines. Is the mouse driver causing this or is it the computer?

S. Johnson, Lichfield

It's the driver and the programs. The driver uses the system timer interrupt of 18 times per second to verify the mouse position. As the mouse port needs to be checked more often than 18 times a second for most applications, the driver resets the timer at three times normal speed - 54 times a second - and passes a third of these interrupts to DOS, which needs them for its clock and to refresh the RAM chips. If you have a program which resets the timer chip to its default value, then the system will run at one third normal speed because only one third of the interrupts are getting through. On your Amstrad you can solve the problem by using the `mouse/s` command. Use `mouse/f` to get it back to normal. MB.

Amstrad Upgrade

SOMEONE TOLD me that it was difficult to upgrade from Amstrad computers. Is that true? What can be done about it?

C. Dickens, Rochester

Amstrad's philosophy was (and is) to produce electronic consumer goods at an extremely low price. This means getting components from the cheapest reliable source. It also means that some of the components are non-standard. Amstrad computers often have unusual chips, their own idiosyncratic type of keyboard and mouse, and so on. You might find that the expansion slots are not full height or width, that the chips are glued in and that the case is too small for a new motherboard. The later models

are better in nearly all these respects but in general it is hard work upgrading an Amstrad. If you decide to go the whole hog for a new motherboard, you will probably need one from a specialist supplier. Before you buy anything to go in your Amstrad, check that it fits. MB.

Bulletin Blues

WHAT PRECAUTIONS should I take when downloading games from a bulletin board? I am worried about such things as viruses.

C. Isherwood, Cambridge

Any responsible sysop (the person who runs a bulletin board) should make sure that viruses do not get a chance to invade the system. Accidents, however, do happen. You should have a virus scanner on your system and try to download to floppies rather than your hard disk. I know this is a pain. If you are on a network, log off if you can so that only your terminal is infected. MB.

The Waiting Game

WILL ALL GAMES soon be in the Super VGA standard? Should I upgrade now or wait?

J. Gower, London

Wait. For at least two reasons. The first is that there isn't really a Super VGA hardware standard. By that I

mean that although all Super VGA boards support 800 x 600 pixel resolution and some support 1,024 x 768, they don't achieve it in a standard way, so it isn't possible for programmers to write software that will work at these resolutions in all cases. In these circumstances games - and other - programmers will stick to 640 x 480 displays. There is standard called VESA, but that only handles 800 x 600 in 16 colours. I'd wait till the dust settles. The second main reason, if you're still with me, is money: the monitors and cards are pretty expensive. The first golden rule in computer hardware is never to be the first kid on the block. MB.

Cut And Be Damned

HOW CAN I delete so-called 'hidden files'?

F. Kafka, Prague

Why do you want to? Some programs use these as a sort of 'anti-piracy' device, but DOS uses and creates them too. Such files cannot be altered nor can they be listed with the `dir` command (although `CHKDSK` will reveal them). Some utilities will remove the 'hidden' flag and any format will remove everything. But again, why do you want to do this and are you sure? MB.

XT-C?

I HAVE AN XT clone with a CGA monitor. Can I upgrade it to a VGA?

J. Macaulay, Oxford

Yes, but you will have to find an eight bit VGA card - most are 16 bit, so be careful. Then all you have to do is fit the card and plug in the monitor. Remember to tell `SETUP` and `CONFIG.SYS` that you have fitted it all. MB.

Joystick Jugglers

WHAT SORT of joystick do I need for a PC? Where does it plug in?

V. Woolf, Bloomsbury

You need a PC compatible joystick, oddly enough. Joysticks for other computers will not be any good. As to where to put it, your computer may have a joystick or 'games' port at the back with a 15-way D-type connector (consult the manual). More likely, you will need to buy a card. There are a few that just give you joystick controls for about £20-£35; but you will soon wish you had some sort of sound capability. For that you need a full blown games card from about £80 upwards. Get one that is compatible with at least Sound Blaster and Ad-Lib. MB.

Virtuality

WHAT IS Virtual memory?

P. Larkin, Hull

The opposite of real memory. Programs like Windows swap unused blocks of memory to disk. You can set aside part of your hard disk as a permanent swapfile, which will speed things up when the program runs out of RAM and starts using virtual, disk, memory. MB.

Initial Confusion

WHAT ARE ISA and EISA? Are they important?

J. Joyce, Dublin

ISA stands for Industrial Standard Architecture and EISA is the acronym for Extended Industrial Standard Architecture. Both are terms for the computer's connection

Extended Amnesia

I keep on getting a 'not enough memory' message when I run certain games. I don't understand this as I have a 386(SX) machine with 1Mb extended memory.

E. Bronte, Haworth

MS-DOS can only use 640k of RAM at a time. You can put in as much 'Expanded' or 'Extended' memory as you like; only certain programs - like memory managers, operating systems like Windows and 'serious' software like WordPerfect - can take advantage of the space. Typing in the DOS command `mem` you will probably get a report like this:

655360 bytes total memory
655360 bytes available
498448 largest executable program size
393216 bytes total extended memory
0 bytes available extended memory

This means that although you theoretically have 640k, you have drivers or TSR programs (pop-up utilities) reserving part of it and only 487k is actually available to be used by a program. Many programs need the full 640k.

Should the program give the 'not enough memory!!' message, then make a boot disk. This is done by putting a clean disk in drive A and formatting it by using `format a:/s`. Copy any drivers the game needs to this disk and write to it the following `AUTOEXEC.BAT` file:

@ECHO OFF

MOUSE [or whatever drives you need]

C:

CD [whatever directory the game is in]
[whatever the game .EXE file is called]

Reset the computer so that it boots from A. MB.

with cards or daughter circuits, and is done by means of an 'expansion bus'. A bus is just a name for a set of wires with a common function, especially the carrying of data.

The XT sent out data in 8 bit chunks and worked at 4.77MHz. This was thought to be amazing, as was the XT's ability to address 640k of memory. The AT started at 8MHz and had some 'double' sockets on the motherboard for 16 Bit cards. When the speed of ATs got up to 20 and 33MHz, people began to worry.

Computer signals travelling at high speed do not always stay on the tracks - the tracks being the wires on the motherboard. This is caused by things like capacitive coupling and transmission effects. Everybody knows that computers cannot go that much faster with the present, XT based, architecture.

IBM introduced Micro Channel Architecture with the PS/2 series and hedged it in with all sorts of patents. Manufacturers had to pay IBM to use the technology and a lot of them thought "to hell with it". They went on to design their own improved architecture, calling the old IBM standard 'ISA' for Industrial Standard Architecture and their new version 'EISA', or Extended ISA.

MCA has not become the industry standard IBM had hoped for, and EISA is now looking slow and outdated. In 1992 Intel released another standard, PCI or Personal Computer Interconnect. Intel is offering this to the industry royalty free (not quite the same thing as free). Still, it could be enough for PCI to become the new standard. One is certainly overdue. **MB.**

The Real Thing

WHAT IS THE difference between real and protected mode?

R Browning London W1

When the 80286 chip was introduced it had real and protected mode. Real mode meant that it acted like an old 8086 and was compatible with all the software that was then available for the XT. In protected mode the 286 could support virtual memory, hardware multitasking and a larger memory space. DOS can only run in real mode. Incidentally, when the 80386 came in it offered another option - virtual 86 mode - which allowed it to multitask DOS programs. Windows makes use of this mode to protect simultaneously running DOS applications from each other. **MB.**

Format Problems

I TRIED TO format a magazine cover disk - so that I could use it again - and all I got was a message

First Essentials

What are the minimum requirements for a computer that will play most current games?

W. Scott, Abbotsford

I would say that the minimum now is a 386 computer running at 20MHz or above, with at least 45Mb hard disk and driving a VGA monitor. As for memory, 1Mb now seems to be the rule, more if you can afford it. Certainly, don't buy any monitor below EGA and there is no point buying a 286 machine now that 386's are in the same bracket. **MB.**

Compatibility

I am thinking of buying a PC but I find all this talk of 'clones' mystifying. What makes a computer IBM compatible? Are all clones equally compatible?

T. Hardy, Dorset

The ability to run all software that runs on IBM computers. To do this it will need an Intel (or equivalent) 8086 family chip, it must run MSDOS and it must have a compatible BIOS. Some programs by-pass BIOS and DOS calls in favour of their own, specially written, routines. Most clones are as near to exact copies of IBM machines that the law will allow. Some of the early clones (e.g. Amstrads and Zeniths) had non-standard chips, but any reputable clone (no, I can't define that) should be perfectly compatible. **MB.**

saying 'Invalid media or track 0 bad - disk unusable Format terminated'. Does this mean that there is something wrong with the disk? Or just that I can't format it?

T Gray, Stoke Porges

You are trying to format a 720k disk under DOS 5, and it just won't have it. Use the command: `format a:/f 720`. Remember that once you have written to a 720 disk with a 1.44 Mb drive you should definitely not try to use it on a 720 drive. Amongst other reasons, the heads of a 1.44Mb drive are smaller. **MB.**

Built For Speed

I FIND THAT many of my PD games run too fast on my 486. Can I do anything to slow them down? I seem to remember a dongle for the Spectrum that could do this.

J Austen, Chawton

I remember the thing - Slowmo? It was a hardware device that worked by interrupts. There are some Shareware/Public Domain programs that use the computer's interrupts to slow down the apparent speed of the processor. One by David Goodwin is called SLOW286 and it reins in your computer to 4.77MHz, the speed of an XT. VARISLOW, a program by Ray Usher, gives variable speeds. The trouble with VARISLOW is that it uses the left and right shift keys - keys often used by games themselves. If you have an Amstrad PC, there is a nifty command "device speed = x" where x is the desired speed in MHz. This gives you total flexibility. **MB.**

Beeping Nuisance

WHY IS IT THAT when I try to use the PRINT SCREEN key when I'm playing a game I get a nasty and most frightening beep? I want to be able to print out maps and things like that.

A Ransome, Conniston

You must remember that the two devices that attach to your computer - the monitor and the keyboard - are themselves programmable. To the computer the keyboard is just an array of switches; the symbols and letters printed on the keys are irrelevant. When a key is pressed, the keyboard sends the computer an interrupt signal on interrupt 9. This causes the ROM-BIOS interrupt handler to interrogate the keyboard to find out which key has been pressed. It sends a command code to a port address and the keyboard sends a message on the lines of 'key pressed, three across and two down' through another port address. The keyboard ROM-BIOS also keeps alert for special key combinations such as soft reboot (CTRL-ALT-DEL), BREAK and PRINT SCREEN. PRINT SCREEN uses interrupt 5.

Lots of programs need to take over the keyboard. Sometimes it is to interrupt crucial key combinations, at other times it is simply so that 'U' no longer types the

letter U but instead sends your starfighter soaring into the dark blue yonder. When a program takes over the keyboard it usually hijacks the keyboard interrupt and redirects it to the program rather than the ROM-BIOS. Some programs take full control, so that the ROM-BIOS never 'sees' the keyboard at all. There are a couple of shareware games like this; if you don't have a mouse you can't play.

Others programs are content to allow normal operation and only intercept particular key combinations. This is usually to prevent you from crashing the program. I suppose a program might interrupt PRINT SCREEN and ignore it to prevent you printing out bits that should belong only in the manual. One solution to your problem is a frame grabber. Be sure to test it or get one that has been favourably reviewed. Not all of them are equal and I would think that none of them works with every application. They are also fairly expensive pieces of kit. Why not try to run your games under Windows? Windows intercepts PRINT SCREEN and uses it to copy the screen to Clipboard. Note that you cannot copy graphics from a non-Windows application when Windows is running in standard mode. Incidentally, Ultima Underworld II has a frame grabber built-in. I hope this idea spreads. **MB.**

Nothing Comes Of Nothing

I TURNED ON my computer today and nothing happened. I mean, nothing at all. Help!

G W S Gilbert, St Albans

What nothing? Is it plugged in? Is the mains socket switched on? Don't worry, it's happened to us all. Still no joy? Check the fuses. Is the fan on the computer going? If all is really dead, check the voltage selector. Switch the monitor on and off. Does it make a crackling sound? If it is plugged into the computer, connect it to the mains via a suitable plug - occasionally a monitor will draw too much power through a computer and blow a fuse. This should sort out 99.999% of all problems.

If it doesn't and the computer is still under warranty, send it back. If the computer is no longer covered by a guarantee or maintenance contract then open it up. Are all the leads in place? Is there a big black hole on the motherboard where it got zapped by lightning? No? Then your last chance is a technique known as 'poke and hope'. Sometimes the temperature cycles in a PC can cause the components to move out of their sockets. This is described as 'walking'. With some sort of insulated probe - such as a (dry!) toothbrush - press each chip gently and firmly. If any have decided to wander, you'll feel them go back in. Before you do this check that no chip has legs that have come right out of the socket, otherwise you will bend or break them.

Something amongst the above will sort out your problem and I bet you anything you forgot to switch on the mains socket. **MB.**

Literary Lager Lout

I recently poured a can of lager down my computer. There was a loud bang and it doesn't work any more. What can I do?

G. Elliot, Berkshire

Not much. It sounds like you shorted the power supply (PSU) and you may have done irreparable damage to the motherboard. Try getting a new PSU - they're about £20 - and don't drink while you're fitting it. If that doesn't work you will probably have to buy a new computer. **MB.**

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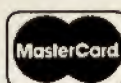
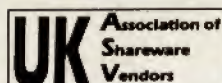
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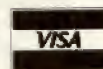
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SHAREWARE PACK 2 (The Graphics Pack) £17.00

This pack contains 4 programs and many B&W clip art pictures. The programs are: Desktop Paint, Graphic Workshop, PCX Show, and Image Access. The clip art collection is: Hornpack PCX; Cuddly Bears 1 PCX; Children PCX; Houses 2 PCX; Smartart IMG Collection; Dogs & Cats PCX; Family 2 PCX; and PCX Animals. The programs work best with an EGA or VGA monitor and Desktop Paint requires a mouse.

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Commander Keen 1 (Invasion of the Vorticons), Commander Keen 2 EGA (Goodbye Galaxy), Commander Keen 3 (Aliens Ate My Babysitter), Duke Nukem, Captain Comic, Crystal Caves, Paginutz, Secret Agent, Spellchick, Three Ball Juggler, Dark Ages, Moralf's Blast, Superfly, Battle for Atlantis and Love Manager. These programs require an EGA or VGA monitor.

SHAREWARE PACK 7 (CGA Games) £11.00

Commander Keen 2 CGA (Goodbye Galaxy), Striker, Xenix, 3-Demon, Pharaoh's Tomb, Ed's Chess, Digger, Cube, Fire & Ice, Omega War, Tornaks, Archery, Beast, Superz, Fusion, Pacman, Hopper, Space Invaders, Junior Joe, Slowdown, Double Blocks, Popcorn, Q-Bert, David's Kong, Dragons, Shrine of Kroz, Lost Adventures of Kroz, Paratrooper, Zaxxon, Brainstorm, Encounter, Dam Busters, Command, Starship, Trivial Trek, Elevator, Columns, Blackbox, Round42, Gameboard, Pitfall, Spacewar, Dragons, Tank, Sopwith, Flightmare and Circus. These programs require a CGA, EGA or VGA monitor.

SHAREWARE PACK 8 (CGA Games) £11.00

Ford Simulator 1, Burger, Chernobyl, Galactic Conquest, Blastiga, Lawn, Pinball Games 1, Willy the Worm, Mario Brothers, Tetris, Motorman, Pango, Du, Frogger, Ships, Landmine, Oilwell, Caverns of Gink, Wheel of Fortune, Boa, Mainbrace, Busido, Romaz, Stained Glass, Gapper, Kamakaze, Space Miner, Xetris, Boatwar, Brain Child, Conqueror, Darwin's Arena, Rimix, Stopping, Arctic Adventure, ZYT - The Object Oriented Game, Alfie and Tear Down the Wall. These programs require a CGA, EGA or VGA monitor.

SHAREWARE PACK 9 (Windows ATM Fonts) £20.00

This pack contains 134 fonts. They vary from reasonable to good and are mainly decorative. This pack requires Windows 3 and the Adobe Type Manager program.

SHAREWARE PACK 10 (Windows ATM Fonts) £24.00

This pack contains 94 fonts. They vary from reasonable to good and are mainly decorative. This pack requires Windows 3 and the Adobe Type Manager program. These are different fonts to Shareware Pack 9.

SHAREWARE PACK 11 (Windows True Type Fonts) £17.00

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SHAREWARE PACK 12 (Windows True Type Fonts) £14.00

This pack contains about 90 True Type fonts. They vary from reasonable to good and are mainly decorative. This pack requires Windows 3.1. These are different fonts to Shareware Pack 11.

SHAREWARE PACK 13 (Archivers) £11.00

This pack contains a large number of file and program archivers (compressors). There are also many utilities specific to archivers and also some source code. Includes: Lha; Pzip; Pak; Zoo; Arj; Split; Zook; Zzap; Looz; Shez; Zip Chucker; Zip-Kit 9; Arcmaster; Diet; Slim; Pkzmenu; Noah; Lhmenu; Lharc; Lhx; Sez; Okumura; Ziptr; Nabob; Lzexe; Unlzxer; Compack; Pklt; Ozf; Recommint; Strippz; Unzip; and Cvt.

SHAREWARE PACK 14 (Apogee Games Collection) £17.00

This pack contains a collection of the best games from Apogee Software. Includes: Wolfenstein 3D; Cosmo's Cosmic Adventures; Word Rescue; Math Rescue; Secret Agent; Duke Nukem 1; Commander Keen 1 (Invasion of the Vorticons); Commander Keen 2 EGA (Goodbye Galaxy); Commander Keen 3 (Aliens Ate My Babysitter); Crystal Caves; and now Spear of Destiny, the sequel to Wolfenstein 3D. This pack requires an EGA/VGA monitor for most of the games. Cosmo requires a 286 or better machine - Wolfenstein requires a 286 or better machine and a VGA monitor.

SPECIAL OFFER Order any 3 shareware packs from this list and pay for only 2 of them. P&P extra (£1 UK, £2 Europe)

SHAREWARE PACK 15 (Windows True Type Fonts) £14.00

This pack contains about 90 True Type fonts. They vary from reasonable to good and are mainly decorative. This pack requires Windows 3.1. These are different fonts to Shareware Pack 11 & 12.

SHAREWARE PACK 16 (Windows Games) £11.00

This pack requires Windows 3.x and contains over 45 games. Includes: Lucas; Brick; MB; Moku; Mr Mind; Taipei; Winkpoke; Yacht; Alien-F; Bang Bang; Blmpat; Klotz; Slot; Spacewar; Wordchat; Backgammon; Tetset; Winchess; Winpenle; Yahtzee; Archard; Brontym; Blackout; Calculation Solitaire; Concentration; Roulette; Take One; Attax; Columns; Neko; Trails; Blackjack; Las Vegas Blackjack; Code Breaker; Cubic; Command; Pitter; Triplets; Chomp; Second Conflict; Win-Away; Scramble; Hangman; Match; Frocks; Search2; and Canlid. Also included are 3 replacement VGA video drivers.

SHAREWARE PACK 17 (KJV Bible) £15.00

This pack contains the complete KJV Bible text with a concordance search facility. It will work on all types of monitor but requires 4.5M of hard disk space. Both the DOS and Windows 3 versions are included. The program comes from the USA and is called Seedmaster.

SHAREWARE PACK 18 (Murder & Mystery) £10.00

This pack contains five great graphical adventure games for those with murder in mind. Includes: Hugo's House of Horrors; Hugo II - Whodunnit; Hugo III - Jungle of Doom; Last Hall of Darkness (both EGA and VGA versions); Dracula in London. These games require an EGA or VGA colour monitor and are highly graphical but do require some typing of words.

SHAREWARE PACK 19 (Junior Educational) £11.00

This pack contains many educational programs suitable for children from 5 years to 11 years old. Includes: Mathmaster; Dad's Choice; Math Practice; Memory; Save the Planet; Mathtest; Mom's Math; What's the Problem; Mighty Math; Animated Memory Game; Animated Math; and Animal Quest. The last 3

programs require an EGA or VGA monitor, the others require a CGA, EGA or VGA monitor.

SHAREWARE PACK 20 (Learn a Language) £12.00

If you want help on your French, Spanish, Italian, German, Chinese or Japanese then maybe this pack is for you. Includes: French Hangman; French Tutor; French Assistant; German Tutor; Italian Tutor; Spanish Hangman; Spanish Tutor; Spanish for Travellers; Chinese; Chinese Flashcards; Cantonese; Japanese; Translator Dictionaries. All these programs require a CGA, EGA or VGA monitor.

SHAREWARE PACK 21 (A Windfall of Windows) £16.00

This pack has over 80 different utilities, games, fonts, educational programs, etc. All these programs require Windows 3 (some will require Windows 3.1). There are too many to describe here but we are sure you will not be disappointed.

SHAREWARE PACK 22 (DOS Tutors) £12.00

This is a collection of DOS tutors, reference text files and utilities ranging from the very simple to the extremely hard. Includes: Tutor Dos; PC Prompt; Tutor Com; Dos Help; GCSE Computers; Dos Practice; Dos Manual; Quikhelp; File Ext. Help Dos; Dos Summary; Dosea - Absolute Beginners; Dosea for MSDos 3; and Dosea 6.

SHAREWARE PACK 23 (Super EGA Games) £11.00

This is a collection of 8 games for colour EGA or VGA monitors. It consists of: Jill of the Jungle; Mike Rook 1; Lavacab; Kiloblast; The Orion Odyssey; Solitaire; Ladder Man; and Keen Dreams.

SHAREWARE PACK 24 (Great EGA Games) £11.00

This is a collection of 13 games for colour EGA or VGA monitors. It consists of: Crusher; Green; Catacomb Abyss; World Empire; EgaTrek; Intra Galactic Battles; Oilcap; Dodgem; Robomaze 3; Tile Match; Kalah; Leong; and Palanda.

SHAREWARE PACK 25 (VGA Games) £11.00

This is a collection of 7 games for colour VGA monitors. It consists of: Death Watch; Capture the Flag; Corncob 3D; Doublink; Galactix; Moralf's Escape; and Phylos.

SHAREWARE PACK 26 (Windows True Type Fonts) £14.00

This pack contains over 90 True Type fonts. They vary from reasonable to good and are mainly decorative. This pack requires Windows 3.1. These are different fonts to Shareware Pack 11, 12 & 15.

SHAREWARE PACK 27 (Windows Waves) £11.00

This pack contains over 100 WAV files and lots of WAV utilities, such as VDC to WAV converter, AdLib WAV player, drag and drop WAV player, etc. This pack requires Windows 3.1.

SHAREWARE PACK 28 (Junior Educational) £11.00

This pack contains many educational programs suitable for children from 3 years to 11 years old. Includes: Math Workout; Math Castle; Dinosaur Database; Melissa's Music Flashcards; Gooey Review; Gooey Math Games; Logo Graphics; Wordtrix; Flags of the World; Alphabet; and Flags.

SHAREWARE PACK 29 (GIF Images) £11.00

This pack contains over 80 colour images in GIF format. Most are in 256 colours and they vary from drawings to photographs. Also included is VJIMAGE, a utility to print and view GIF, PCX and TIFF files. You will need a VGA colour monitor to view these images properly and also some computer experience to set up the program.

SHAREWARE PACK 30 (Windows Games) £11.00

This pack requires Windows 3.x and contains over 30 games. Includes: Ant Farm; Almonds; Bandit; BattleSat; Blitzler; Block Breaker; Button Madness; Dice; GNU Chess; Galting; Hop; IQ Test; Ice Frite; Lander; Landmine; Puzzle; Slide; Space Walls; Termite; TicTacToe; Triplets; WinNack; WinNack; WinWheel; Window Craps; Wormwar; Mines; Checkers; Icon Hunt; Simon; Patience; Accordion; MLC Guessit; and Brain Games.

SHAREWARE PACK 31 (SoundBlaster) £11.00

This pack contains a mixture of programs and music files for your SoundBlaster board. Includes: Musician 1 (music composing); Modplayer (plays Amiga MOD files, requires 386 or better machine); JPlayer (plays Amiga MOD files); Drumblaster (electronic drum machine); Trakblaster (plays Amiga MOD files); and many music files for you to try out. This pack requires the SoundBlaster board, a 286 or better machine and a VGA monitor.

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TROUBLESHOOTER

FEATURING THE HACKMASTERS™ AND THE TRUEPLAYERS™

The gamesplaying world is at war. Two sides in a never ending battle for domination. On one side, the HackMasters™ – techno cyber-punks committed to laying waste to swathes of code, dedicated to furthering the cause of cheats, hacks, pokes and spots. On the other, the TruePlayers™ – old fashioned games masters, who sit for hours (come rain or irate wife) with a cup of coffee and a digestive biscuit, drawing maps on little pieces of notepaper and truly laying the game.

Troubleshooter is the mediator in this conflict. It presents both sides of the argument, makes no judgement, and fields the abuse from either side. We are the Boutros Boutros Ghali of the games tips world (although not quite as completely useless).

The Bottom Line

The bottom line is that you're going to have to be a little bit specky to get these hacks to work. Also for most of them you will have to possess a sector editing utility such as *Xtree Gold*, *PC Tools* or *Norton Utilities*. You will also have to be able to use them (Oh no! – A million Mr.Cursors).

The HackMasters™

HackMasters™ and *PC Zone* take no responsibility for direct or indirect damage caused to software or hardware by the use of the HackMaster™ hacks. If you follow the guidelines closely no damage will occur. Try turning around and touching the ground once inside a pentangle laced with fresh cloves while saying "NATAS" – this sometimes works too.



IT'S DEPLORABLE. It's senseless. It's ruinous. It's evil. It's hacking (or breaking into other peoples' code to provide yourself with a substantially enhanced advantage over the opposition) and is frowned upon by most of the gamesplaying fraternity, especially by the TruePlayers™. But boy is it fun fun fun! The HackMasters™ do it for a living.

"I predict that in today's society the subversive growth in popularity of the so-called Dungeons'n'Dragons will produce a generation of tossers (aka the TruePlayers™)... [who talk] about trolls and goblins, don't say they're 'ill' but say (in an annoying RPG voice) 'Oh no, my constitution points are zero' and carry their 'spell book' around with them when they go shopping".

Friedrich Neitzche,

Role Playing Games And Cardigans (1889).

If you're fed up to the gills with Neitzche's RPG anti-supermen, then this month's HackMasters™ section is written for you. You are not alone in your violent dislike of these 'people'. The HackMasters™ too, dislike people who type their names into RPGs (seriously) as 'Arghania the Unquenchable' or ('amusingly') as 'Colon The Vegetarian'. And yes, the HackMasters™ also hate they who make continual moany references to the good old days when Dragons were little painted lead figures, and Dungeons were little bits of paper on the living room floor, when they and their sad mates got together and pretended to be all these different characters and the ponciest one among them became the Dungeon Master. These TruePlayers™ we too hate.

Take this lowly page, then, as a virulent outpouring of scorn and derision for these people. Read on and gleefully crush the 'RPG ethic' by artificially boosting all your stats to God-like levels in a range of poncey poncey RPG games.

Backup

Most of the hacks on this page and indeed in the future will require changing actual game files. One slip, one tiny mistake and your entire game can go "catchuz later". So backing up the files to be

hacked is essential. This may be patronising but, as the old HackMaster™ adage goes, "'tis better to be patronised than loose £45 spondulicks worth of software from your hard disk".

Say the file specified in the hack is `GAME1.SAV`, then back it up with:

```
COPY GAME1.SAV BACKUP.BAK
```

Then if any problems occur, copy the back up file onto the original file with:

```
COPY BACKUP.BAK GAME1.SAV
```

Any problems – don't ring us.

Hexadecimal

Computers are funny old boxes. They don't use the old ten fingers, ten digit, decimal human way of counting. They have to be specky and use base 16 or Hexadecimal to calculate things (actually, the bottom line is that they use binary, but for you – and the HackMasters™ – Base 16 or Hexadecimal is the easiest way to work).

Hexadecimal basically counts like this: 01, 02, 03 all the way to 09 and then 0A (for 10), 0B (for 11) up to 0E (14) and 0F (15) and then 10, which in decimal, is the number 16. It sounds complicated for the beginner but you only really need to learn a few choice hex numbers for HackMaster Experiences™ (please note all hex numbers on the page will be suffixed with an 'H' so there's no confusion, e.g. 6AH or FFFFH). Remember, just to complicate things, that hex numbers above 255 decimal are stored as two digits in reverse. So 1,535 in decimal is 05FFH but is stored as two bytes: FF 05. Simple eh? But remember the bottom line is – if it doesn't work, experiment. Don't ring us unless it's an emergency. ☹

HEX	DECIMAL
0AH	10
0FH	15
10H	16
20H	32
40H	64
63H	99
64H	100
C8H	200
FAH	250
FFH	255

(Right) *Crusaders Of The Dark Savante*: You are in the middle of a forest with a severe multiple personality disorder. What next?

(Bottom) *Legends Of Valour*: After an attack by the HackMasters™ we can no longer play the game. Here's the title screen.



D-GENERATION/Mindscape

Okay, the term of abuse 'RPG' has to be stretched a little to include this game. But it's old, it's mappable and your character has 'stats' – how much more proof is needed?

Enter the game, save it as soon as you start and then quit out. Backup the file `SAVE.DAT`, edit it with your sector doofer, and search out the following hex bytes:

```
02 05 00 00 00 00 05 00 50 00 00 00 7F 7F 05 00
■ Lives
■ Max Lives
■ Grenades
■ Bombs
```

Change the ones you wish to `FFH` for astonishing amounts of everything.

LEGENDS OF VALOUR/US Gold

Another US Gold RPG spoiled or rather, in this case, mildly unsettled. Since the aim of *Legends* is two-fold: a) to stare at the 3D effects and say "gosh", and b) to interact with a primitive – but some might say, microcosmic – capitalist society in your 'quest', the HackMasters™ feel it only too right to strike a blow for socialism and award you with a huge amount of lolly.

Create a new character. Kit him out and then save him in slot one. Exit the prog and backup the file `CHAR01.DAT` and then run your sector editor. Change both bytes `22H` and `23H` (or 34 and 35 in decimal) to `63H`. Save and you'll be more of an upper middle class adventurer when you start your adventure.

Alternatively if you have no sector editor per se,

use the following commands on the DOS utility `DEBUG` in the `LOV` directory. Pressing return after every line, type:

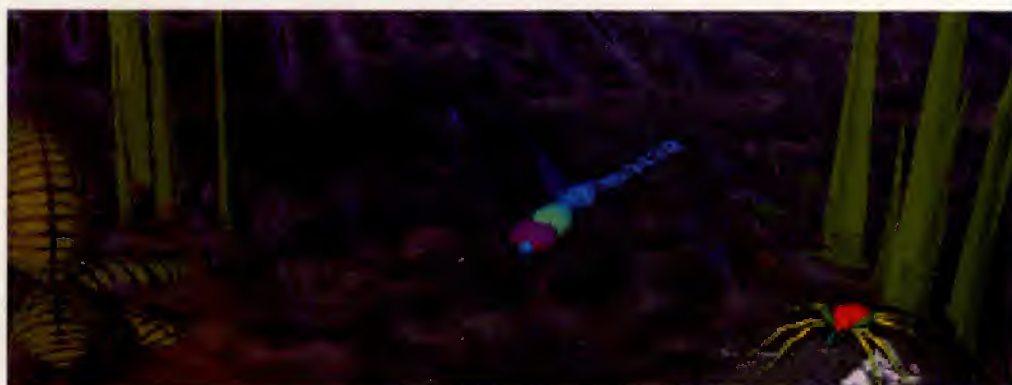
```
>DEBUG
>NOCHAR01.DAT
>L
>E 0122 63
>E 0123 63
>W
>Q
```

CRUSADERS OF THE DARK SAVANTE/US Gold

Another day. Another US Gold game. Another RPG. Another hack. Create your characters, build up your team and then save your game (skip this bit if you've been playing it for a while). Quit and backup the file: `SAVEGAME.DBS`, edit it, search out the names of your characters and the bytes will look something like this:

```
■ ■ ■ ■ ■ 00 00 5E 1C 00 00 00 00 00 00
00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ 00 00 3C 00 3C 00
33 00 94 02 01 00 01 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00
00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ 04 00 04 00 0E 0E
```

```
■ Char name
■ Hit points (FFH 05H for 1535 HPs)
■ Strength (Same as HPs)
■ Level (FFH for 255)
■ Fire spells
■ Water spells
■ Air spells
■ Earth spells
■ Mental spells
■ Divine spells
```



EYE OF THE BEHOLDER II/US Gold

Start the game, go through all that character creation malarkey, and then instantly save the game in save slot 1. Quit the game and backup the save file (just to remind you) with:

```
COPY EOBDDATA1.SAV BACKUP.BAK
```

Now edit the file `EOBDDATA1.SAV` and seek out your characters' names. The bytes should look a bit like this:

```
00 00 00 00 00 01 ■ ■ ■ ■ 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00
00 ■ ■ ■ ■ 00 00 0A 00 00 00 00 00 09 05 05 ■ ■ ■ ■ 0B
00 0B 00 0A 00 00 0B 00 01 01 07 00 00 98 0D 01
■ Name
■ Strength
■ Intelligence
■ Wisdom
■ Dexterity
■ Constitution
■ Charisma
■ Current Hit Points
■ Maximum Hit Points (type FFH for 255 HPs)
■ Amour Class (type F6H for an AC of -10)
■ Experience Level (the highest is 16 or 10H)
```

Change the individual stats at your discretion. The HackMasters™, of course, explored deep into the coding of *EOB* and discovered some truly remarkable hidden spells not listed in the manual. Spells like Bigby's Magic Fist, Disintegrate and, the scary sounding, Death. Have fun.

THE SUMMONING/US Gold

The method for this is much the same as *EOB II*. Start the game and once Thorgandia Son Of Thor (or whatever your poncey RPG character is called) is sorted, save the game (in the first slot) and quit out. Change into the `SAVES` directory, backup the file `D201.SAV` and then edit it. Find the name of your character and from the start of the name count the bytes and edit the following:

BYTE	EFFECT	RANGE
80	Current Hit Points	Enter 05FFH for 1535 HPs
82	Maximum HPs	Same as above
84	Current Spell Points	Ditto
86	Max SPs	And again
88	Armour Class	0-FFH (0-255)
90	Strength	0-63H (0-99)
91	Agility	0-63
92	Endurance	0-63
93	Accuracy	0-63
94	Talent	0-63
95	Power	0-63
96	Maximum Strength	0-63
97	Max AG	0-63
98	Max END	0-63
99	Max ACC	0-63
100	Max TAL	0-63
101	Max PWR	0-63

And to completely spoil your enjoyment of the game the HackMasters™ came up with a list of all the spells in the game (but you'll have to work out what they do yourself): DJ, DHJ, DFHJ, GHK, IBF, KLGL, ABIBGJ, BDE, DB, BIKG, FACH, LGKBF, IEJLA, CLJDHI, GLFKIF, ELADJKJC, FHGACABF, ACA, LKEF, HDJH, IKJEB, LGHLAL, JGKHFB DJ, EIBDJAF, FH, EDL, CAKI, FHBELH, JGK, HFBDJ, EIB, and DJAF.

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The TruePlayers™

"And lo! The Lord didst perceive the HackMasters™ for they were ignorant and vile and unrepentant cheaters (not unlike Wimbledon FC). The Lord was filled with the Wrath [of The Lord] and he didst strike down the ignorant and vile and (etc) HackMasters™ with lightning and they didst wet themselves, and poo themselves and run around and scream like little children".

God, Genesis II v.11-16



Our first ever TruePlayer's™ complete solution (and therefore 'spoiled') game is the very pleasing to the eye, *Alone In The Dark*. **Andrew Clerkson** did the deflowering and pillaging.

The attic



FIRST THINGS FIRST, rearrange the furniture. Push the cupboard in front of the window and the chest over the trap door – this keeps mad dogs and zombies at bay. Search the furniture and take the gun, the rug and the oil lamp.

Second floor

Grab the oil and the bow. Go into the room on the left and take the sabre from the chest: the key's on the desk. If the sabre breaks, keep the broken blade because you'll definitely need it later on in the game.

Smash the vase in the room opposite and left to get a key to open the chest of drawers – take the two mirrors. You've got a zombie and a half-dog, half-emu thing on your tail. Shoot the 'dogemu', just stay out of the zombie's way.

Drink the contents of the flask in the bathroom for extra strength. Then dispose of the demons on the stairway by placing a mirror on both of the statues in the corners – they're so hideously pug-ugly, one look at themselves and they die of pure embarrassment.

First floor

Go to the room on the right. Grab the gramophone, cartridges and matches but step carefully around the spook, if you touch her, she'll go into juggling ball mode and spin you to death.

Take a quick detour to the conservatory (downstairs and left). Pick up three arrows from the statue and hightail it out

before the spiders close in on you.

Back upstairs, go into the corridor on the left. The toothy giant sea anemone in the bathtub is a bruiser but you need the water jug. Best method: run in with your sabre, give the blighter a good clout, pick up the jug, give it another hefty clout and do a runner.

Get the statue from the next bedroom (lob this at the knight to get his sword).

Put the rug on the picture of the Davy Crockett character in the gallery, then fire an arrow at the picture at the far end. Get the fake book and key (behind the clock) from the far room.

Next stop – the library. Light the lamp, drop it and go sharp left between the bookcases, right at the end, then put the fake book in the bookcase. Go through the secret door before the library phantom – the twin brother of Mr. Bump from *The Mr. Men* – blubbers all over you. Pick up the daggers and the talisman, then carry the dagger with the wiggly handle into the library and stab 'Mr Bump'. Now you can settle down with a few good books before going downstairs. Don't forget to grab the lamp.

Ground floor

There's loads of stuff in the kitchen – get the cellar key and eat the biscuits from the pantry on the right. Then go to the other little room and pick up the oil can and the gun. Fill the jug with water from the barrel.

Go to the dining room, take the kid gloves off and do some serious zombie bashing. After the zombies are bashed, run into the adjoining room and pour water from the jug onto the smouldering cigar (remember: smoking is a dirty habit, and it doesn't make you look cool or mature).

Use the key that you found behind the clock to get into the study. Place the sabre (handle and blade if broken) on the plaque to reveal the entrance to the underground caves. Don't go down yet! Take the record from the shelf and go to the dance hall.

To get to the dancers, you must fight the pirate. Use the knight's sword and be careful – he's a salty old sea dog and can swing a mean cutlass. When you've killed him, use his key to enter the hall.

Play the green record on the record player. Grab the key from the mantelpiece, bob and weave to get out of the door and don't touch the dancers.

Now you can go down the secret stairway, but check your inventory first – you will need the lamp, the lighter, the talisman, the key from the dance hall, and some weapons.

Under the house

Run across the bridge and take off down the tunnel. Then, when you see the slimy slug, dive



Alone In The Dark



Time to buckle your swash and gird your loins while this guy tries to get to the point



In a game like this there are times when you need to just sit down and think things through.



Chairs, chairs, where the hell did I put the chairs? Complete social disaster

into the tunnel on the right. Send the slug the wrong way by popping your head out of the tunnel until you see him, then run back to the end you came from and go right.

The next three caverns are connected by the swamp, so you can just dive in and wade through – but then you have to deal with the bug-eyed sea monster. Otherwise, run round the wooden platform and jump over the loose boards.

At the standing stones, jump across to the opening. The birds can be killed with the sword or daggers but it's just as easy to avoid them.

When you get to the wooden bridges, go left at the sabres then right at the skulls. Open the chest with the key from the

dance hall and take the gem. Then push the large stone behind the chest and go to the maze. In the maze, go right, following the outside wall around the edges until you come to a door with a hole in it. Put the gem in the door to open it.



You're on the last leg. Jump straight into the water, ducking and diving the fireballs and old bug-eyes as you go. Get to the altar, drop the talisman and pick up the hook. Throw the oil lamp at the tree (it must be on). All hell then breaks loose.

Now get out of the house before it falls on top of you. Scarper to the rock ledge on the character's right, dodging the boulders. Use the hook to open the door, go into the maze and use the hook on the door to your immediate right. Run back around the edge of the water and up into the tunnel. Go right, straight up the tunnel where the slug was first sighted and through the hole into the cellar. Run to the ground floor and out of the front doors where your very iffy chauffeur is waiting to take you safely home..

Handy hints

- * There are loads of books that contain useful information but only read the books that are green – the others will drive you crazy.

- * Always keep your lamp well oiled and have

plenty of matches and your lighter.

- * Keep your guns loaded.

- * Drink from the flasks, munch on the biscuits but don't slurp the soup.

- * Don't touch the ghosts.

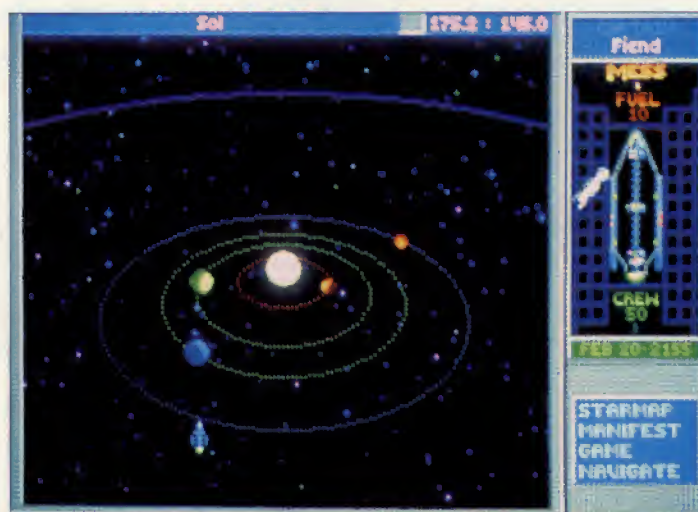
- * You don't have to fight all of the zombies but it's damn good fun if you do. ☑



SPOTTED

Star Control 2

Star Control 2. Not only one of the most enjoyable and nicely presented games of last year, but also one of the most deceptively difficult... hence The TruePlayers™ A-Z guide of Where To Go and Who To See from Sol to Beyond. Yes, what follows is a complete solution to the game. However, we've angled it so that you still have to do a wee bit of work yourself. All the information you'll require is contained within the next four pages, but you have to extract it yourself, cross reference, and do things in the order that seems to make most sense to you. In cases where you have to do one thing before another, we'll tell you, but otherwise it's up to you. So here we go...



WE CAN'T imagine anyone *not* getting past the *Star Control 2* opening sequence (in the Sol System) – but there's always one. So here's a very (and we mean very) brief walk through.

In the beginning

- 1** Go to Mercury and collect some radioactives – if your lander gets destroyed by fire you can get another from the satellite orbiting earth.
- 2** Go to the moon and destroy everything you see.
- 3** Go to the satellite orbiting earth and talk to the geezer. He explains everything so much better than we could, so we won't bother.
- 4** Go hunting for minerals on the inner and outer planets of the Solar System. On Pluto you'll meet Fwiffo, a Spathi. Don't kill him,

because he'll join your crew – and Spathi ships (once you've got used to them) are pretty handy against virtually anything.

5 Return to earth, unload your minerals, buy as many planet landers as you can afford and then head out into the unknown.

Beyond Pluto

"Now you're cookin'" as a particularly naff person would say, because you've got to increase your wealth (and therefore firepower) by visiting every single local star system and mining it until – well, until you haven't got any cargo space left on your ship. You'll need to make a few trips. Remember to save quite regularly, and take note of the following chart: it tells you which are the best systems to go for, and once inside which are the best planets. Oh, and note that if a star is particularly large then the chances

are that all the planets are going to be too hot for your planet landers. The rule is that if the outermost planet is too hot, then all the others will be too.

Overall here, the idea is to try not to stray too far – all that'll happen is that you'll have to spend more money on fuel, and you might even stray into enemy space by accident and get blasted to smithereens. (Not that it matters if you've saved recently, but you know what we mean – "live the game" and all that).

Things to buy

As you keep revisiting the Sol Space Station and receiving dosh for your minerals, invest in turning jets, thrusters, cargo holds, fuel pods and landers – you'll need heaps of lander if you intend to stock up on biological cargo.

The traders

Before very long you'll find yourself straying into the Alpha Centurii System. Here you'll encounter the Melnorme, a friendly race of traders. What they want from you is (a) data on biological life forms and (b) locations of what they call 'rainbow worlds'. The rainbow worlds are few and far between, but will earn you 500 credits apiece.

From the Melnorme, it's worth buying the technological upgrades first (as they make life a little easier)... but you'll eventually need to buy their information as well, the reason being that as far as the program is concerned, if the Melnorme haven't told you about something, then you don't know it –

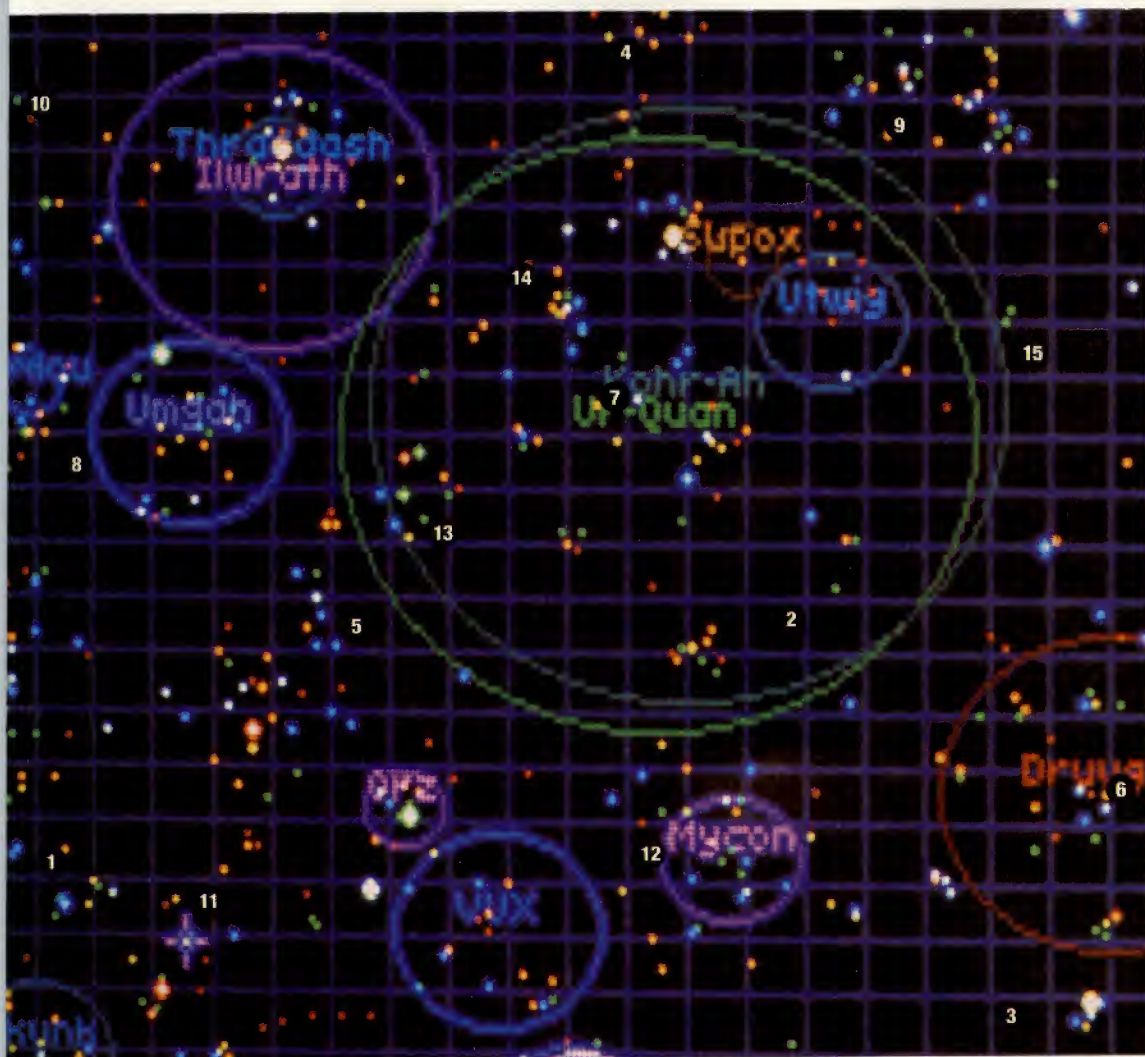
and so certain questions or statements won't pop up when you're talking to the other races. (If you don't know that alien A has made a bomb then obviously, you can't ask alien B about the thing). ☹

Systems which will probably yield nifty minerals. In descending colour order from excellent to crap...

WHITE, BLUE, GREEN, YELLOW, ORANGE, RED.

Planets which will probably yield nifty minerals. In descending colour order from excellent to crap...

VIOLET, YELLOW, ORANGE, CYAN, GREEN, BLUE, PINK, RED, WHITE.



Ever wanted to get from Hull to Brighton in under 0.0002 pico seconds?

Then send our spiffy hyperspace/quasi-space map to British Rail HQ and ask them to stuff it in their ideas box. Flying to point (2) in quasi-space brings you out at point (2) in hyperspace. Point (5) in quasi-space will lead you to point (5) in hyperspace. And so on. Even Nigel in Eastenders could understand this.



THE A-Z OF ALIEN ARTIFACTS AND RACES



IF YOU can't finish the game with this comprehensive guide at your side, then you may as well commit suicide

now and do the world a favour. Everything you need to know is here. Locations, the lot...

ADMIRAL ZEX: He has a female Shofixti in his menagerie.

Homeworld: Alpha Cerenkov, planet one.

Admiral Zex is perfectly approachable, and, unlike other members of the Vux race, he doesn't find the sight of humans too distasteful. What you want from him is his female Shofixti. To get her, you'll need to supply the Admiral with a beast he has been after for some time. The beast in question can be found in the Delta Lyncis system. Go scanning for biologicals, find it, return it to him, collect the female Shofixti, and leg it.

AQUA HELIX: See Thraddash and Ultron.



ARILLOU: More friendly than your own mum, the Arilou.

Homeworld: Quasi-space

To enter quasi-space (and thus meet the Arilou) you need to find the portal, which lies somewhere between the Chandraskhar and the Columbae constellations. Once in quasi-space, the Arilou's homeworld is blindingly obvious, as it's separated from the main cluster of 'stars' by about a zillion miles.

If you can give the Arilou a Warp Pod, they'll give you the ability to warp into quasi-space any time you damn well please (without having to return all the way to the portal).

BOMB: To complete your task you're going to need a powerful bomb – and as luck would have it just such a bomb exists.

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No.	GRAPHICS & ART	Disks
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352	DESKTOP PAINT Commercial quality painting program, Excellent!	1
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357	IMAGE GALLERY V1.0 Helps keep track of bitmapped image files	1
358	VGA CAD V2.51 Great VGA Drawing/CAD/Paint package	3
359	VGA PAINT V1.1 Excellent VGA graphics/drawing program	1
360	PAINTERS APPRENTICE Like PC Paintbrush, DR, Halo, etc	1
361	TSQUARE V2.3 Truly professional CAD package	4
362	PC-DRAFT II V3.26 Simple easy to use graphics package	1
363	TURBO PAINT V1.5 Alternative to PC-Paintbrush, Deluxe Paint	1
364	EASY PRESENTATION GRAPHICS V2.04 Charts & graphs	3
365	GRAPHICS WORKSHOP V6.1 Scale, convert, view any graphic type	1

367	PCX SUPERSHOW Create customised screen presentations, excellent	2
368	FLOWDRAW V2.2 Draw / flow / system / electric charts	2
370	GIF PICS Large collection of GIF's to start your collection	5
371	GIF UTILS Superb utilities for use with GIF pictures, a must!	2
372	PCX CLIP-ART Animals, Automobiles, Birds, Dogs, Cartoons, Frames, Computer Related, Fantasy, Figures, Holiday, Humour, Office/Business, Religion, Santa Claus, Medical/Science, Food, One Subject Per Disk!	2
373	CLIP-ART Very large collection of miscellaneous PCX Clip-Art	4
374	SMARTART CLIP-ART III 130 images from The SmartArt Library	1
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376	FLI ANIMATIONS Animations that will amaze you, includes Player	3
377	PRINTPARTNER GRAPHICS Large collection of add in graphics	4
378	EGA/VGA DEMO'S Collection of programs to show off your graphics	3

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407	FRED'S RECIPES 3,500 recipes for Edna's cook book above	4
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410	ASTRO Astrological analysis program	2
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412	CROSSWORD CREATOR V4.3 Create & print crosswords	1
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420	TRACKBLASTER FILES Lots of music/sound files for above	3
421	SOUNDBLASTER UTILS/MUSIC Large collection of utils & VOC files	3
422	ADLIB UTILS/MUSIC Large collection of utils & ROL files	3
423	ONLINE BIBLE V6.0 The ultimate Bible program, very latest!	22

No.	LEISURE/GAMES - EGA/VGA GAMES	Disks
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452	COMMANDER KEEN Invasion of the vorticons	1
453	COMMANDER KEEN II Goodbye Galaxy, CGA Version Available	1
454	COMMANDER KEEN III Aliens ate my baby sister	1
455	DUKE NUKEM Stop Dr Proton from ruly the world	1
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458	SECRET AGENT	1
459	WORD RESCUE	1
460	PAGANITU	1
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468	TESS 35 tile set for above from Nels Anderson	1
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556	POWERMENU PLUS V6 Powerful easy to use menu system	2
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Location: Zeta Hyades, planet six, cond moon.

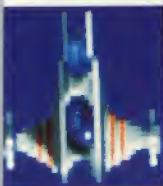
Don't expect to get this bomb before you've spoken to the Utwig.

ASTER: A sort of radio type thingummy doofer.

Location: Spathi homeworld.

You will be given this item by a grateful Spathi – should you give the pathi in question reason to be grateful, that is. If you can't get the aster from the Spathi you could be lightly bugged, because it's about the most useful object in the game.

CLEAR SPINDLE: See Pkunk and Ultron.



CHENJESU:

Friendly, but hard to contact.

Homeworld:

Procyon, planet two.

The Chenjesu and the

Mmrnmhrm are living together on the surface of a slave shielded planet which means that you can't talk to them. Unless, of course, you have the aster... which is powerful enough to penetrate the slave shield.

If you can get hold of an item called the Sun Device, then take it to the Chenjesu/Mmrnmhrm homeworld and activate it when in orbit. You'll discover what happens when you do this.



DRUUGE: Not very pleasant, but approachable.

Homeworld: Zeta Persci, planet one.

The Druuge are traders, and the

currency they deal in is slaves. You need something the Druuge have got, namely the Rosy Sphere. The price for this crucial item? The Druuge will exchange it for 100 of your men, so make sure your crew pods are packed to the brim. Poor crew.



DYNARRI:

Very evil, with psychic powers.

Homeworld: He can be found on the Umgah homeworld.

The Dynarri's psychic powers can compel you to fly into Ur-Quan space on a suicide mission. However, protection from his powers comes in the guise of the Taalo Shield. This shield isn't foolproof, but you can expect it to be

about 99% reliable... the best you can hope for really, seeing as there are no other psychic shields in the game. Plan on picking up the Dynarri later rather than sooner. It is wise to follow his instructions.

FINAL BATTLE:

Location: Delta Crateris.

When you've done absolutely everything else, fly to Delta Crateris and look for the planet with the Sa-Matra in orbit. (You can't miss it – there are about 200 Ur-Quan and Kohr-Ah ships in orbit as well). Have a word with your Dynarri and he'll cause a diversion. You'll be left with three Ur-Quans and three Kohr-Ahs. These you take out yourself. Then it's time for the end of game nasty... the Sa-Matra itself. Good luck.

(Hint: don't bother with weapons on your mother ship... just fill her up with crew. And for your battle with the Ur-Quans and Kohr-Ahs you should take a fleet of Chmmrs... although obviously it is a matter of personal taste at the end of the day).



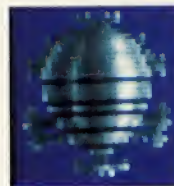
ILWRATH:

Religious, manic nutters... deadly, with it.

Homeworld:

Alpha Tauri, planet one.

This lot have been told to kill you (among others) by their Gods, Dogar and Kazon. In reality, and unbeknownst to the Ilwrath, their Gods are the Ur-Quan, who are transmitting messages into Ilwrath space. Should you happen to have the Caster, however, you can transmit messages of your own – use the Caster from just outside planetary orbit.



MELNORME:

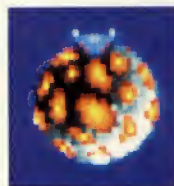
Friendly traders with lots on offer.

Homeworld: Various... they're space nomads.

The first

Melnorme you'll encounter will probably be in Alpha Centauri. Make sure you've got plenty of biological units (locations of rainbow worlds are even better). Sell whatever you can to the Melnorme and buy whatever they're offering.

If you get stuck in hyperspace without fuel, you can hail the Melnorme by using the Caster. They will fly out to you and refill your tanks – for a price.



MYCON:

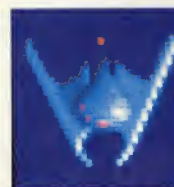
Rather unfriendly.

Homeworld: Beta

Brahe, planet one.

You won't get much joy from

the Mycons until later in the game, when you give them some information you received from the Syreen. When this information exchange has happened, most of the Mycons will disappear to another region of space. However, five Mycons will remain in orbit around a planet – in the vicinity of co-ordinates 635:225 – and you have to do battle with them. If successful you will be able to collect, from the planet's surface, an item called the Sun Device. This is the device needed by the Chenjesu.

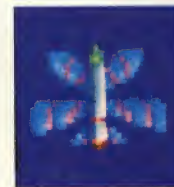


ORZ: If you can make any sense of the Orz, then well done.

Homeworld:

Gamma Vulpeculae, planet one.

Try and jolly the Orz along, in whatever way you can, and they might eventually decide to give you some of their ships – which is brilliant, because Orz ships are among the meanest in the universe. What you want to be careful of, though, is mentioning a certain 'word'. This 'word' makes the Orz very unhappy.



PKUNK: Very friendly. Over friendly, if anything.

Homeworld:

Gamma Krueger, planet one.

One of the first things you'll receive from the Pkunk is the Clear Spindle. You need it later in the game. Another thing the Pkunk supply you with is as many of their ships as you desire. They may be slightly on the crap side, but for free? Can't complain.

You may notice, at some point, the Pkunk venturing towards Yehat space. If you can, you really ought to attempt to talk them out of it.

PORTAL:

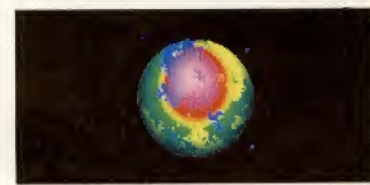
To the nth dimension.

Exact location: Co-ordinates 50:650

The portal is a worm hole between hyperspace and quasi-space. You will meet the Arilou in quasi-space. The portal between the two dimensions

appears only once a month, on the 17th. It remains stable for a couple of days and then disappears again.

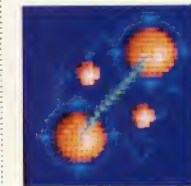
QUASI-SPACE: You could call quasi-space hyperspace's hyperspace. But whatever you call it, there's one thing for sure... it's the only way to travel. Each of the 'stars' in quasi-space is a worm hole back into hyperspace – and if you want to know how to get around using quasi-space you might need to take a look at our map. An important note about journeys via quasi-space is that not only do they save you fuel consumption (i.e. zero), but also time: a one month hyperspace journey can be completed in one day using quasi-space.



RAINBOW WORLDS: The equivalent of cash.

The Melnorme pay mega bucks for the locations of these 'special' worlds, which means, in turn, you can upgrade/buy info to your hearts content. When you've got enough fuel, it's worth checking out the following co-ordinates (which aren't totally exact, but we don't want to make this too easy – you'll be asking us to wrap you in cotton wool next)...

Rainbow World 1–50:750
Rainbow World 2–380:780
Rainbow World 3–540:830
Rainbow World 4–850:875
Rainbow World 5–750:500
Rainbow World 6–600:300
Rainbow World 7–460:90



RED PROBES:

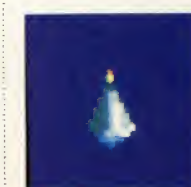
Dangerous during the early stages of the game.

Homeworld: Beta

Corvi, gas giant.

All will become apparent when you make the visit.

ROSY SPHERE: See Druuge and Ultron.



SHOFIXTI:

Warlike, but not dangerous at all.

Homeworld:

Delta Gorno, planet one.

When you meet

the lone Shofixti, he will want to engage you in battle. If you find yourself drawn in, don't kill him. You'll have ample time to escape (not that he'd hurt you very much if you didn't). Keep engaging the Shofixti in conversation, and use insults on him. Eventually he'll become friendly and tell you that he needs a female Shofixti. There is one, and you will find her in the Vux system, on a planet inhabited by Admiral Zex.

**SPATHI:**

Cowardly.
Homeworld: Epsilon Gruis, planet one, moon.
The Spathi are scared of a

'beast' who roams their planet - which is why they've moved to their moon. Kill the 'beast' and the Spathi will become your bosom buddies. See Caster.



SU-MATRA: A massive Precursor battleship.

This is 'the prize'. This massive spaceship is what the Kohr-Ah are in the process of winning in their battle with their 'brothers' the Ur-Quan. Once the Su-Matra is definitely theirs, the Kohr-Ah will engage in a mass 'genocide tour' of the universe. Yikes. And this all happens in the year 2159 if you haven't done anything about it.

SUN DEVICE: See Chenjesu and Mycon.

**SUPOX:**

Ridiculously friendly sentient plants.
Homeworld: Beta Librae, planet one.

The Supox will hand you something called the Ultron. It is broken. You have to fix it. If you can fix it, it's worth talking to the Utwig (who live 'nearby', in interstellar terms).



SYREEN: Very accomodating 'space babes'.

Original homeworld: Beta Copernicus, planet one.

Current homeworld: Betelgeuse.

To get most joy from the Syreen, the Melnorme have to have sold you this information: "The Syreen homeworld, Syra, was destroyed by the Mycons." If you have bought this information, you'll get the chance to prove to the Syreen that what you say is true (as they're labouring under the misconception that their planet was destroyed by volcanic activity). All you need for proof is an item you'll find on the surface of the original Syreen homeworld. It's an eggshell fragment. As well as getting to actually bonk the Syreen you talk to (really), you'll also be given some information which you should take to the Mycons. You do need to do the Syreen a favour, though. They want some of their ships collected from another planet. The constellation you need to check out is Camelopardalis.

TAALO: Either extinct or 'somewhere else'.

Homeworld: Delta Vulpeculae, planet two, moon.

While the Taalo were thriving, they made a device called the Taalo Shield. This shield protects one from psychic energy - more specifically it protects you from the psi emissions of the Dynarri. Apparently the Taalo Shield is still lying around somewhere on the surface of their now abandoned planet.

**THRADDASH:**

Extremely warlike and brash.

Homeworld: Delta Draconis.

Whenever you get the chance to kill a Thraddash, do so. They respect you for it. Keep talking to them every time you meet them (i.e. before you kill them) and eventually you'll notice a change in their attitude. It's totally hilarious.

There's a crucial item in Thraddash Space called the Aqua Helix. It's on the surface of a planet in the Zeta Draconis system. Get it.

ULTRON: A device required by the Utwig.

Location: Various, as it's in bits.

The magical ingredients for the

Ultron are: (1) the Rosy Sphere, (2) the Aqua Helix, (3) the Clear Spindle and (4) the Broken Ultron itself. Once you have all four parts, simply 'use' them and you'll have the all new, all working Ultron. Take it to the Utwig.

See also Thraddash, Druuge and Supox.

**UMGAH:**

Mildly dangerous practical jokers.

Homeworld: Beta Orionis, planet one.

The Umgah have a 'talking pet'. It's real name is a Dynarri.



UTWIG: Morose and depressive, but friendly nevertheless.

Homeworld: Beta Aquarii, planet one.

The Utwig are - well, let's not beat around the bush - they're totally pissed off. Why? Because they've broken their Ultron. They've given the main part of it to their neighbours, the Supox. The other bits are scattered around the universe. The Utwig are pretty handy to know, because they have access to a very powerful bomb... it's the sort of bomb that helps you finish an entire computer game. They keep this bomb on another planet. If only you could reunite the Utwig with their Ultron, repaired...

**VUX:**

Not friendly in the slightest. Ugly, too.

Homeworld: Beta Luyten, planet one.

About the only good thing you can say about the Vux is that they're not too hard to kill.

WARP POD: A device that warps the fabric of even hyperspace.

If you can take the Warp Pod to the Arilou, well, it'd be well worth it. But where is the Warp Pod? See Wrecked Dreadnought.

WRECKED DREADNOUGHT:

A stuffed up Ur-Quan ship.

Location: Alpha Pavonis, planet seven.

There's something inside the wreckage of this long abandoned Ur-Quan Dreadnought. It's something that can be squeezed onto a planet lander and brought back up into the ship. (And it's not a biscuit and raisin Yorkie bar).



YEHAT: Almost friendly.

Homeworld: Somewhere in the Serpents constellation.

Once you've sorted out the Shofixti problem (i.e. when there are a limitless number of Shofixti ships available at your base), pay the Yehat a visit and take a Shofixti along for the ride. It will cause a civil war, and the Yehat will split into two factions - one of which will furnish you with Yehat Terminator ships, well, whenever you want them basically. Free.

**ZOQPOT:**

Aliens resembling male and female human genitalia.

Homeworld: Alpha Tucanae, planet one.

The Zoqpot are fairly useless, and their ships are even more useless. But you can't help liking them. Besides, if you can't get a caster from the Spathi, the Zoqpot may have one knocking around instead. ☒

MORE PLEASE

These few pages are a taster of what to expect over the next few months from Troubleshooter (featuring the HackMasters™). If you - the reader - feel you have something to contribute to these pages then do so. We can't play every game until finished. We can't tunnel every troll (still illegal everywhere except Amsterdam I'm afraid). We can't spoil every RPG, sim or arcade adventure that comes out. So you, readers, must spoil the games for us. Fill the gap. Send your solutions, hacks, tips, cheats, maps, codes, tricks, tactics to:

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The best decimation of a game each month will receive 50 quid cash, and two runners up will be posted a piece of software from the Zone cupboard. Next month the HackMasters™ destroy *Ultima Underworld* and *Alone In The Dark*.



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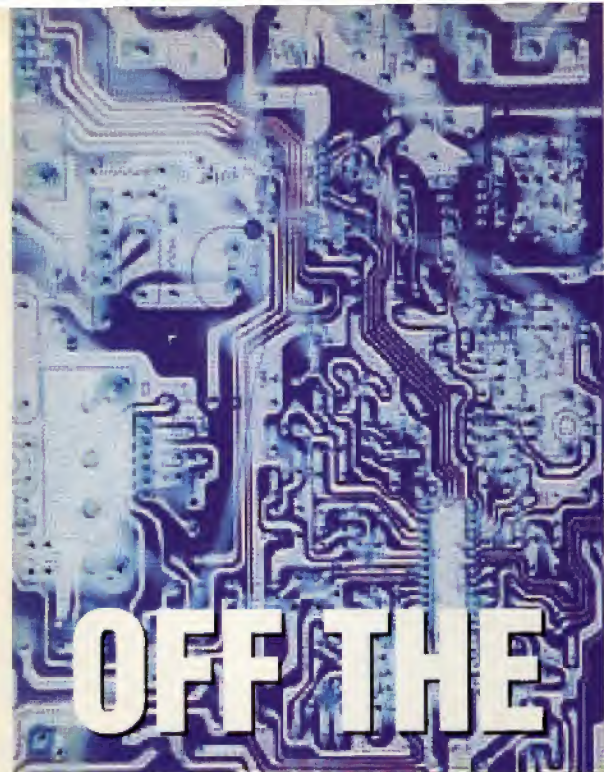
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OFF THE BOARDS

(Below) "Guten Tag" screams the Arnie clone in *Wolfenstein* just before turning you to mincemeat – very graphically. (Bottom) Your plane in *Corncomb 3D* – the trusty Corsair P47



Don't know your PD from your Shareware?
Mark Burgess explains what it all means, picks the best games available and then tries to blag a £15 registration fee off you.



THERE ARE thousands of games that are either completely free (Public Domain) or offered free for a trial period (Shareware). The quality varies from the indifferent to the excellent – just like commercial software, in fact.

Where does it all come from? Well, there are still many late night programmers in America's universities writing games for the sheer love of it, and there are people who use PD as a sort of portfolio to advertise their skills. A minority are written by programmers with ideological commitment to free software or a dislike of the commercial houses. Some people just want to see their names in pixels.

Although PD and Shareware have been around almost as long as computers, it is surprising how many PC users fight shy of them. There are all sorts of reasons; many users are simply ignorant of what PD and Shareware have to offer. Some have heard dire warnings about the viruses that infect cheap software, although viruses occur most often on pirated software. They are no more (or less) likely to occur on PD or Shareware than on a commercial program.

Neither are PD and Shareware programs any more prone to bugs. Fellow bulletin board contributors keep each other up to the mark. Few commercial end users subject their software to the sort of scrutiny and treatment that hackers inflict on each other's productions.

Where can you find these programs? There are many libraries that distribute them; a selection is given at the end of this article. You can also download them from a bulletin board. The second way is cheaper, but you might not get the most up-to-date version of a program. On the other hand, some libraries get their copies from bulletin boards anyway.

It is really a case of personal preference. Libraries will supply virus-checked disks and will offer support. Bulletin boards should be swept regularly for viruses anyway and will have a section giving tips for the most popular games.

If all this stuff is free, why do you have to pay for it? Well, if you download from a bulletin board, then you are paying the connection charges and the 'phone bill. Any reputable library will only charge enough to cover the cost of the disk, duplication and distribution. Some PD and Shareware programs are now available as 'Rackware' – a silly term meaning that the disks are actually sitting in a shop somewhere (probably on a rack. Ed) so you don't have to send off for them. These programs shouldn't cost much more than those offered from libraries.

Although PD and Shareware seem biased towards utilities, there are some excellent games. Apogee have made a reputation for themselves with high quality productions such as *Crystal Caves*, *Wolfenstein 3D* and the *Commander Keen* series (latest installment: *Aliens Ate my Babysitter*). Cygnis made a stunning debut last year with the shoot 'em-up, *Galactix*.

Advantage Shareware ships out about 3,000 PC disks a week. "The main problem with PD and Shareware is that people still don't understand how it works... they don't know that the quality is very good," says Jeffrey Green from Advantage.

The libraries agreed on the most popular; *Commander Keen III* – *Aliens Ate my Babysitter*, and the Apogee games. Transend sold over a thousand copies of *Catacomb Abyss*, an EGA adventure game from Gamers Edge, in the first month of release.

Last year the same names dominated; "*Wolfenstein* was tops for '92", says Neil Blaber of the Public Domain & Shareware Library, "*Commander Keen II* – *Goodbye Galaxy* was also popular".

There is a trend towards VGA only games. Games are also becoming more hungry for memory, although they have a long way to go before they reach the inflated requirements of commercial offerings.

On to the best around:

What is public domain and shareware?

Public Domain: This is software that's free. You can copy and distribute it as you like. The only conditions are that you do not pass the work off as your own, do not incorporate it in another program without due credit and that you do not charge money for something you have got for nothing.

Shareware: This is software that asks for a registration fee, either after a specific time or 'if found useful'. The fee varies enormously and you are morally obliged to pay it or stop using the program although it is true that many programs ask you to send \$5 to an address in Wichita. A leading shareware author recently estimated that an outrageous 90% of users don't register. Registration brings the latest version of the program, a place on the mailing list for updates and, surprisingly often, a properly printed manual. Not to mention a warm glow of deep moral satisfaction.

Others:
Bannerware/Adware – this is a program where the author does not ask for any payment but reserves copyright. This means that you have a free license to use and copy the game.
Demonstrations – many commercial software houses will release a playable demo of their latest games so that you have some idea of what you're expected to pay £50 for. Definitely fair play. Not very often found in libraries, they tend to live on the cover of magazines or on bulletin boards.

(Right) Cruiser firing off everything in order to defeat some hideous alien beast in *Overkill*



(left) Homing in on the Aliens' base in order to inflict some serious structural damage in *Corncob 3D*.

FLIGHT SIMULATORS

CORNCOB 3D/MVP Software

FLIGHT SIMS are badly represented on PD because of the huge amount of development needed. Head and shoulders above all others is *Corncob 3D*. This puts you in control of a 1949 Corsair 47. The twist is that the game is set in a parallel universe, where aliens invaded the earth in 1938. Some very nice graphics give you the full, if fanciful, story. The governments of the earth have united in the face of the aliens' attack and, of course, you are the brave pilot who will take on the intruders. The aliens are odd spheres and polygons. Background intelligence will tell you how to deal with them and give you a few tips. If you don't feel like flying to the action, pressing return on the briefing screen will drop you right in the middle of it.

Lots of instruments, on-line help and an autopilot when you're feeling a bit knackered, make this game as easy as you want. You can even fly an invulnerable plane when training.

Kevin Stokes and George Welch (MVP Software) are to be congratulated on the beautifully detailed graphics and intelligent action. Needs an AT running at 12MHz or faster with VGA, 560k RAM free and a hard disk (although you could just get by with a HD floppy so long as you copied COMMAND.COM to it).

The registration fee of £17 brings a deluxe version with more features and missions.

★ **Also look at:** *Jet Flight Simulator* which puts you in the cockpit of a jet fighter.

747 - simulation of Boeing 747 (no!). Requires patience. Interpc. - F16 Interceptor

ARCADE

OVERKILL/Epic Megagames

OVERKILL IS A space based shoot 'em-up, very like *Galaxians* or *Zaxxon*. Those who played *Xenon II* will notice a generic similarity. The aliens seem to have more fire power, or perhaps my reflexes are going, so I died a lot in the early stages. But once you have got beyond them, the excitement mounts. When you destroy the aliens' craft, you are often left with a bonus - extra fuel, shields, smart bombs or - best of all -



upgrades. These allow you to graduate from your feeble, put upon Scout Ship, through Fighter, to Battle Cruiser. Your armaments grow with firenose, single, double and diagonal shot. Fast, Screw and Ring lasers, contour and yo-yo missiles give you a feeling of awesome power.

Concept and coding are by Ste Cork/Tech Noir, Graphics by Martin Holland, Sound and Music by Tony Williams/Sound Images.

Produced by Martin Rein. It runs on EGA or above, needs DOS 3 or higher and 512 k of free RAM. It's about 0.47Mb long and would be slow on anything below a 286. Registration (£25.50) brings more levels, cheats and a bonus disk.

★ **Also look at:** *Kiloblaster*, another one from Epic Megagames. Needs 286 or above and EGA/VGA

Galactix, from Cygnus - a personal favourite, smooth scrolling, digitised speech, boppy soundtrack and totally addictive. The best release of 1992. Needs Hard disk, 286 or above and 640k free RAM.

Star Goose from Logotron - a good *Zaxxon* clone with a goose instead of a jet. Tee hee.



(Above) Mutant insect nasties swarming everywhere in *Phyllox*.
(Below) Splendid graphics in *Overkill*

DEMONSTRATIONS

THE *Indiana Jones Demo* from Lucasfilms is far better than the usual 'Crippleware' produced by commercial houses. You can go a long way into the game and decide whether you want to buy the full version. This sort of thing has to be encouraged at a time when game prices are too high for any normal person to take a chance. There is a welcome movement towards the use of demos as a sort of 'try before you buy' shareware. The game supports Sound Blaster and needs VGA.

★ **Also look at:** Demos around the Bulletin Boards at the moment include *Stunt Island*, *Falcon 3*, *F-15*, *Ancient Art of War in the Skies*, *F-19*, *Twilight 2000*, and *Megatraveller II*.

ADVENTURE

PHYLOX/PSP & Beavis Soft

THIS IS AN arcade adventure that came out at the very end of last year. Not quite in the same league as the runaway success *Wolfenstein 3D*. *Phyllox* is about some mutant insects created by incompetent scientists. The insects retreat underground with their leader, Phylox. You play Retrox, a rather nerdy figure with a jet pack. Can you find and destroy Phylox? If you're good at platform games you should stroll this.

Programming is by Andy Edwardson and graphics by Shaun Gadalla. Registration (£25.50) brings more levels, a bonus disk and a hint sheet. the program is 1.6Mb long and needs a computer at 12MHz or faster and VGA.

★ **Also look at:** *Catacomb Abyss* from Gamers Edge. Sound Blaster support, 286 or faster, and EGA or better needed. Wander around gloomy tunnels and fight off the undead.

If you have a VGA and do not have a copy of *Wolfenstein 3D*, remedy the situation now. Smooth 3D animation with digitised sound effects. Needs hard disk, 286 or faster, with VGA. Supports Sound Blaster.

What do you get?

The disk should contain a file called READ.ME or README.1ST. Read it by typing **TYPE README.1ST** MORE. There will also be some sort of batch (.BAT) file. Typing in the name of it should load the program.

The majority of the programs will come in archived form. This is because the library is trying to fit as much information as possible on a 760k disk. The files will have extensions like .ARC, .ARJ, .LHA, .PAK, .ZIP or (very rare) .ZOO but the disk will come with a program that will decompress the files, together with instructions on how to use it.

(Right) Zentris - the best DOS Tetris clone



GAMES

MOST PEOPLE have played the falling block game *Tetris* by now. It is available in many good versions and several weird variants. *Klotz* (for Windows) is a personal favourite but an amazing implementation for DOS, *Zentris*, has just appeared. Mouse support, VGA needed.

UTILITIES

AS THIS is a games magazine, we don't normally review utilities. However, there are some that no computer owner should be without. The prevalence of viruses means that the suite of programs from McAfee Associates is essential. It comprises *Viruscan* (SCAN.EXE) which detects any viruses, and *Clean-Up* (CLEAN.EXE) that deals with them. Also included is a list of all viruses dealt with by the programs, with a short summary of the 'symptoms', the parts affected and the measures required. *VIRLIST.TXT* gives each virus an ID code used by *Clean-Up*. Don't think that a virus will never happen to you. I had my first ever (*Cascade*) at the beginning of this year and it was far from worth waiting for.

A Windows version is available for those who feel they have to do everything by icons.

COMPILATIONS

DELUXE GAMES II/Benetech Systems

IF YOU ARE new to PD and Shareware and want a selection of the best, this could be for you. There are 70 games in seven categories: Adventure, Apogee, Arcade, Card games, Board games, Simulations and Puzzles. The system requirements vary enormously - there is some CGA stuff in here and some programs that demand a mouse.

The collection comes on 14 disks with an installation program that sets up a 3D menuing system. It's a mixed bag, as you would expect. Classics such as *Invaders*, *Asteroids* and *Pac Man* are represented alongside recent productions like *Aliens Ate my Babysitter* and *Jill of the Jungle*.

The Adventure section includes *Captain Comic* and *EGA Trek*. All major Apogee games are here. In the simulations you can take control of Chicago's Midway airport (*A T Controller*), go fishing for bass, play golf or a fruit machine. The card games include *Blackjack* and *Klondike* and the board games include *Cyrus Chess*, *Mah Jong*, *Backgammon* and *Sorry!* In the arcade group are *Shooting Gallery*, *Star Goose* and *Scud Attack*.

There are two versions of *Tetris*, one in three dimensions and the other with a weird secret document about the rapture, 666 and goodness knows what else. You might not like everything here, but this is a cheap and quick way to build up a good PD/Shareware library with the minimum of hassle. ☐

BULLETIN BOARDS

Bulletin boards are not only places to download games, meet other obsessives and make lots of money for British Telecom. The games forum will be teeming with tips, maps, demos and upgrades for commercial games. You can gauge how good a game is by the amount of traffic it generates. *Harpoon*, for instance, has hundreds of saved games, hints and new scenarios. Such as this:

This is an experiment to prove it's possible to create a Soviet Kiev Class carrier with SU-27s and MIG-29s instead of the YAK-28s.

If this is the sort of thing that sets your pulse racing, then get a modem and off you go.

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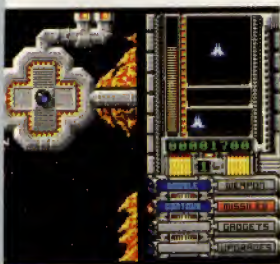


(Above) *Phylox*. The ultimate encounter. (Below) *From Wolfenstein*. Here he is again... all steroid and testosterone. Not the kind of guy you'd find at your local CND rally.



LIBRARIES

This is not an exhaustive list, just a selection. Inclusion does not mean recommendation and no, none of them have paid to be here. Most libraries will have access to over 20,000 titles with a catalogue containing a rolling selection of about 1,500. Some charge for each program, the majority charge for each disk. The prices have been compiled from most recent adverts or telephone calls but may have changed since we went to press; always check for availability and price when ordering.



(Above) Brake! Left! About to become a cropper in Overkill

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paper and send it to us. Then we might even print it and you might get a prize. Then again we might not and you won't. But you know, life's like that, full of uncertainty.

Idstuff

ALL THE TALK these days seems to be about leaps forward in PC technology, how more powerful machines make for more advanced games. Great. So one seems to be worried about the leaps back that the PC games market is making. There was a time when you could rely on the PC to provide adult games by which I don't mean *Strip Poker* or even *Leisure Suit Larry*, but complex flight sims and in depth adventures which relied more on brain power than the ability to hack a few Tolkien-rip-off features to pieces.

Increasingly it seems that software houses are living under the crass illusion that they have to compete with consoles. The news that *Streetfighter 2* was to appear on PC is what prompted this letter. *Street Fighter 2* on the PC - do me a favour! However more worrying than a crop of arcade games (after all I don't need to buy them) is the apparent simplifying of PC games to make them appeal to the terminally stupid who want immediate results. Flight sims seem to be becoming more like arcade games/shoot 'em-ups than genuine sims. Similarly adventures are becoming less of a test for the brain, more of a treat for the eye. Now that Amstrad is launching a machine that's part PC, part Mega Drive, surely the writing is on the wall. If I wanted to play Sonic I'd buy a bloody Mega Drive.

G. Hurst, Wembley, London

Variety is the word here. As the PC becomes more widely used as a games machine there'll be more tastes to cater for and more styles of game available. (Mind you there have always been arcade games on the PC) There's no point being snobbish about games that don't happen to be your kind of thing. Variety is the spice of life... well that and chilli powder. Ed.

Bring On The Luddites

THERE SEEMS TO BE a feeling that soon there will be no games for the 286, new games only running on the 386 or 486. That's fairly typical of the sort of inconsiderate attitude that I've come to expect from people in the industry. As a machine becomes

unfashionable, or is no longer top of the range it becomes harder to get software for it. I suppose the classic example of this is the ST.

It might be more satisfying working on the latest system but we can't all afford to go out and buy a new machine every time one comes out. There must still be a market out there for 286 games just as surely not all ST owners went out and bought Amigas and PCs.

M. Peters, Tottenham, London

You're probably panicking a bit early with regard to 286 software becoming an endangered species. Besides, surely one of the advantages of a PC is that you can upgrade the system you have rather than buying a new one. As for programmers only working on new systems, I know how you feel. I haven't been able to play my old *George Formby 78s* for years. That's progress for you. Ed.

Mavis Beacon

EVER SINCE SEEING her friendly but calmly efficient face on the cover of her *Teaches Typing* software I've had strong yearnings for Mavis Beacon. Hardly a day has gone by that I haven't thought of her, of the times we could have together, the candle lit dinners during which we would discuss the merits of the Qwerty layout or the challenges of Audio typing. How the evenings would fly by on a breeze of touch typing. Now I've heard a dreadful rumour that she doesn't exist! Surely this can't be true. This is a major blow for Mavis fans everywhere, so please tell me it's not true.

B. Moore, West Ham, London

If you want us to tell you it's not true then we will, anything to please, but we'd be lying. Sadly Mavis Beacon is the Santa Claus of the typing tuition world. Ed.

Pigeon Holes

AT THEIR BEST, computer games are original and imaginative pieces of entertainment containing a variety of elements. What a shame that they're rarely matched by the imagination or originality of reviewers who seem to share the obsession of their colleagues in the music industry for cramming everything into pigeonholes. This is not only an

insult to the originality of game designers, it also leads to ridiculous hyphenates like arcade - strategy - adventure - beat 'em-up. Why not treat each game as an individual instead of trying to cram square pegs into round holes.

N. Hunter, Leeds, W. Yorks.

While it's silly trying to force a category on a game, describing its style can be a useful shorthand guide, giving the reader/game purchaser some idea what to expect. However it does get silly when a reviewer tries to cover every aspect and ends up with a name that wouldn't look out of place in German. Ed.

Virus

I'D LOVE TO MEET, or hear from, someone responsible for a computer virus. Not only so I could cheerfully rearrange their skeletal structure while whispering "Bog off and leave my COM files alone" but because I'm really interested to know why they do it. What sort of perverse satisfaction do they get out of screwing up people's lives?

N. Stiles, Bolton

What lies in the murky depths of a Virus programmer's mind? There are some things in life that are perhaps better not to know. Ed.

Get Back

I KNOW IT'S an age old moan but with so few stores operating a try before you buy policy would it not be fair of them to offer money back if a game is crap instead of just bugged. I understand that this is the policy that works in America and it makes sense to me. Surely in the long run it'll result in more games being sold since people will be happier to buy on spec. New games (as opposed to sequels) will particularly benefit because they represent a bigger gamble.

B. Charlton, Manchester, Lancs.

As far as I'm aware there is no legal requirement in the States for a shop to exchange software on the grounds that it's not good enough. The problem with software being easily returned is that although it might encourage more spontaneous purchases it might also encourage more spontaneous piracy. Ed.

Danger Games

YOU KNOW ALL these violent, sexist games that are corrupting games players and turning them from quiet well adjusted human beings into slaving maniacs? Well where do I get them from?


R Hunt, Dewesbury, W. Yorks.

Wouldn't it be altogether wiser if your family bricked you up in a disused part of the house and never mentioned your name again? Ed.

Strange Ways

I WONDER IF you could solve a problem that has been puzzling me for some time now. How do magazines manage to have a letters page in their first issue?

J. Charlton, Leeds, W. Yorks.

It's all to do with a little known Einstein relative time theory and whole bundles of artistic license. Ed. 

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Star Prize

All my life I've wanted to win a piece of software, preferably a game, without exerting too much effort. I've tried entering competitions but never seem to win. This may have something to do with me only being able to answer two out of five questions. I'd be really grateful if you could suggest some way in which I could add to my collection of PC games without breaking sweat, my wallet, or the law.

G. Banks, Stoke-on-Trent, Lancashire

One of the best ways of winning a piece of software is by being PC Zone's letter of the month. And this month you are. What a happy coincidence to be sure. Ed.

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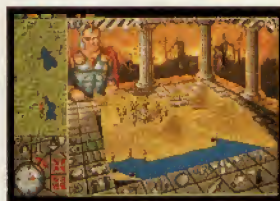
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BUYER'S GUIDE



Welcome to the reference bit. It's not just your average computer games mag reference bit; this is the most up-to-date, the most relevant, and the most comprehensive reference bit ever seen in the world of PC games mags. If you want to know how many flight simulations published by MicroProse are still available, if you have a burning desire to play a particular graphic adventure, but can't remember the title, or if you just want to know what time the number 63 bus runs at, you'll find the answers here*. Below are your instructions for using the Buyer's Guide. We'll print them only once, so digest them carefully, and then tear out this entire page and eat it. (Or should that be the other way round?)

*Erm... unfortunately there was no room to include the bus timetable this month. Ah what the hell the bloody buses never stick to the sodding timetable anyway.

1 Each month we will print a list of most* of the PC games and leisure products that are still available. You won't find us including those useless lists of 'Classic' games, that are old enough for your grandfather to remember and which you can't get hold of for love nor money.

2 The games are listed in several categories, so that you won't have to wade through seemingly endless Quest games from Sierra, just to find a flight sim from Dynamix.

3 One classic game from each category will be highlighted every month for your special attention. These games merit an individual mention because (a) they're bloody brilliant, (b) the publisher slipped us a tenner in the post, or (c) they're crap, but the editor bought them and doesn't see why he should be the only one with an embarrassing software collection.

4 We will also highlight one or more categories each month which we'll expand to include a little bit of extra information on each of the listed games, like what our personal high scores are, what sort of interesting cardboard sculptures we were able to make out of the packaging, or, as a last resort, something relevant.

5 If your fancy is taken by a particular title, just follow these simple steps: **i)** make a note of the publisher; **ii)** look up its number in the terribly handy 'phone list next to this section; **iii)** dial the number, wait for a reply and the following conversation will ensue: "Hello, Megasoft, how can I help you?" "Listen here my good man, I've seen your game listed in the best PC games reference guide in the world..." "Oh, you mean the one in *PC Zone*?" "Yes, that's the fellow. Anyhow, I've seen your absolutely spiffing game mentioned, and I thought, 'Yes, I'd like a crack at that', so here I am, ready to part with my er... readies, for a brand spanking new copy, what!"

6 Now complete the transaction, by arranging payment via your credit card, or obtaining a list of your friendly local software vendors, and the game will soon be yours.

7 Be kind to animals, don't talk to strangers, remember to wash behind your ears, and make sure you get your *PC Zone* fix every month.

*We could have said *all*, but even we aren't perfect. Yes, it's hard to believe, we know.

PHONE LIST

Here we have possibly the most scintillating bit of the Buyers Guide, the 'phone list. You'll notice that many of the numbers are the same, but don't worry, it's not a misprint, many of these companies are distributed through another company in the UK, and where this is the case we've printed the number of the distributor, and the name of the distributor in brackets. Happy 'phoning.

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BUYER'S GUIDE

CLASSIC ACTION



DYNABLASTER
(UBI SOFT, £34.99)
Absolutely the best multi-player action game we've seen. Up to five players run around a maze trying to blow each other up by dropping bombs and then running away

before they get caught in the blast. To reach new areas they must blow up bits of wall. Some sections of wall conceal bonuses which allow you to lay more bombs or increase the range of your blast. Some may also hide skulls which temporarily affect your little man, possibly changing his speed, preventing him from dropping bombs, or making him drop them continuously. The fun of this is that you can then chase other players and try to infect them too. Meanwhile all the players are plagued by monsters which you must avoid or blow up. There's a different game for solo players too, but *Dynablaster* comes into its own when you play it with your pals. It's also supplied with an adaptor which connects to your parallel port and enables two players to use digital joysticks. Very simple and very, very addictive.

CLASSIC ACTION/ADVENTURE



ALONE IN THE DARK
(INFOGRAMES, £44.99)
Not only have Infogrames managed to create one of the best 3D engines we've ever seen in a PC game, but they've also created an environment and a storyline that really do

add up to a spine-tingling game. Inspired by the novels and short stories of H.P. Lovecraft, this adventure has you exploring an ancient house with a mysterious past. The animation, background artwork and atmospheric soundtrack are all superb, and the creepiness is enhanced by the clever use of strange 'multiple camera angles' in each location. You need a pretty high spec machine to get the best out of this one, but if you've got one it's an essential buy.

CLASSIC ADVENTURE



INDIANA JONES AND THE FATE OF ATLANTIS—THE ADVENTURE GAME
(LUCASFILMS, £37.99)
The very best Indy adventure to date, not based on a film, but a completely new story in which Indy discovers the

secrets of the lost continent of Atlantis. Like *Monkey Island 2* this game uses LucasFilms' brilliant IMUSE sound system, and the plot is just as creative. It manages to combine a real sense of discovery and mystery with lashings of typical LucasFilms humour. There are three different ways to play the game, and although hardened adventurers won't find any of them too taxing, this is still worth having.

CLASSIC BEAT 'EM-UP/HACK'EM-UP



GOLDEN AXE
(VIRGIN GAMES, £9.99)
This was just about the only hack and slash action game worth having at full price, and now that it's in the budget range you've no excuse for not buying it. This particular

conversion manages to recreate the original coin-op superbly. There are six levels of totally gratuitous violence as you, and possibly a like-minded companion, battle your way to the Death Adder to recapture the Golden Axe of the title. This has some great features like the dwarves who you must chase and kill to get power-ups and dragon mounts which can be stolen after killing enemy riders. Recommended to all hack 'em-up action game fans.

HIGHLIGHTED THIS ISSUE

ACTION

Hmmm, this is tricky, how do you define a term that is not merely alien to the entire PC Zone team, but actually fundamentally opposes our philosophy for life. Well, here goes anyway. These are the sort of games that appeal to the people who like a bit of excitement in their lives. None of this namby-pamby cerebral stuff for them. They like runny, jumpy, sweaty under the ampmits stuff. So here they are, games in which the emphasis is on twiddling your joystick rather than putting on a brown anorak and dashing down to the British Library to do a bit of pre-game research.

AIRBORNE RANGER (MICROPROSE, £25.53)

A beautiful story of a pregnancy coming to fruition aboard a transatlantic freight flight. Hmm, something's not quite right here... Oh no, this is the one where you play an elite member of the special forces, accept dangerous missions deep within enemy territory, and kill lots of people. Good, if you're not looking for an accurate simulation of combat.

ALCATRAZ (INFOGRAMES, £30.99)

Remember that great classic, *Hostages*? Well, this is the long awaited follow up, in which you get the opportunity to blast and shoot your way into the disused prison island of the title, which is being used as headquarters by a notorious gang of ex-cons who felt homesick. Not particularly inspired, although it would have been okay if it had been released a year and a half ago when it was originally due.

ALL DOGS GO TO HEAVEN (READYSOFT, £29.99)

Sullivan Bluth produce really great animated feature films, of which *All Dogs Go To Heaven* is a recent example. It's software arm, Readysoft, produce some really crap computer games, of which *All Dogs Go To Heaven* is a recent example. A collection of naff action games vaguely based on the film. You'd have to be mad to pay £30 for this rubbish when you can buy a copy of the film for a tanner.

AQUATIC GAMES (MILLENNIUM, £25.99)

The name's Pond, James Pond, fish with a licence to Gill. Yes, the cod with an attitude is back, only this time he's a sports hero. This collection of seaside sporting events (sponsored by Shell?) has plenty of fin-esse, but it lacks that certain je ne sais quoi... something we just can't please. P.S. Did you know that James Pond now has his own fin club? Interested? Then give Millennium a ring for details.

DRAGON'S LAIR 2 (READYSOFT, £39.99)

Subtitled *Escape From Singe's Castle*, this is all the bits of the original *Dragon's Lair* arcade game that Readysoft couldn't fit into the first computer conversion. Descending into the depths of the dragon Singe's castle, you must rescue your beloved Daphne. The gameplay amounts to moving the joystick or pressing the fire-button at the appropriate moment. It looks absolutely gorgeous, and the animation can't be faulted, but it's about as engaging as reading *The Painter and Decorator's Big Book of Classic Paint Drying Stories*.

DRAGON'S LAIR 3 (READYSOFT, £39.99)

Oh joy! More of the same.

THIS MONTH'S CLASSIC:
DYNABLASTER (UBI SOFT, £34.99)
(See box-off for review)

ELVIRA – THE ARCADE GAME (FLAIR SOFTWARE, £25.99)

After her gaming debut via Horrorsoft, the top-heavy tramp of trashy tales of terror bounces into action for a third time in this fun action game from Flair. You must fight your way through several landscapes using spells to overcome the various nasties that assail you. If it all goes horribly wrong you can at least say "Thanks for the Mammary". But you probably wouldn't want to.

GUY SPY (READYSOFT, £34.99)

This tale of a booty hero on the trail of Baron von Max and his Doomsday machine was supposed to finally marry quality animation with decent gameplay, but alas, it's just another example of a cartoon on a computer with token interaction and a ridiculous price tag. Trouble is, people still go out and buy this trash. Do us a favour, if you can afford to throw away £35, send it to us and we'll get rid of it for you in style.

INDIANA JONES AND THE FATE OF ATLANTIS – THE ACTION GAME (LUCASFILM, £30.99)

LucasFilms really amaze us. They come up with an absolutely brilliant storyline for a fourth Indy adventure, they make a good comic and a superb graphic adventure game out of it, then they have to go and spoil it all by creating a boring action game, which simply takes several scenes from the original plot and makes a so-so sub-game out of each of them.

LIFE AND DEATH (MINDSCAPE, £19.99)

If you've a taste for bizarre software then this will appeal to you. It's not, as it sounds, a great philosophical work, but, believe it or not, an abdominal surgery simulator. You have a number of patients in your charge whom you must correctly diagnose and then operate on. It's great fun picking on someone with nothing more than chronic wind, opening them up and then doing some creative stitching, i.e. practising your Fairisle sweater patterns. Well, at least they'll have a pretty scar.



LIFE AND DEATH II (MINDSCAPE, £19.99)

Just to prove that its classic surgery game could actually get sicker, Software Toolworks came up with a sequel which requires a bit more of the old grey matter... the subject is brain surgery.

OFFSHORE WARRIOR (TITUS, £9.99)

A fairly soulless little number involving tearing around in a power boat and shooting things. Not really great value, even at this price.

PAPERBOY 2 (MINDSCAPE, £25.99)

A reasonable reworking of the original arcade game in which you chuck papers at people's doors while avoiding various obstacles. This doesn't really compare with many PC action games pitched at this price, so leave it alone unless you're a real fan of the original.

ROBOCOP III (OCEAN, £29.99)

A better than average 3D platform game with shoot 'em-up elements, featuring the most ludicrous metal man since Robbie the Robot.

THE ROCKETEER (DISNEY, £30.99)

Superb presentation is about the only thing that this *Rocket Ranger* rip-off has going for it. The classic solution to what to do with film licenses has been used: take four or five scenes from the game and turn them into uninvolved sub-games, which amount to a big lot of nothing. Some bits are good fun, but on the whole this is disappointing.



THE SIMPSONS (OCEAN, £29.99)

Nice licence, shame about the game. Guide the vertically-challenged Bart Simpson in his quest to defeat the evil space mutants. Who'd have believed that Matt Groening's brilliant work could have been transformed into something so appallingly unappealing as this?

SPACE ACE (READYSOFT, £44.99)

Dragon's Lair in outer space? Can this really be the case?

So tell me then, is it a laff?

No, like this poem, really naff!

SPACE ACE 2 (READYSOFT, £39.99)

Just in case you hadn't got the message that Readysoft's interactive cartoons are to be avoided like the plague, see this and weep!

TERMINATOR II (OCEAN, £29.99)

Did you see Bethesda software's computer interpretation of the original Arnie blockbuster? Think it couldn't get much worse? Well try this then. This beat 'em-up/shoot 'em-up possibly qualifies as the saddest piece of software we've seen in a long, long time.

TITAN (TITUS, £9.99)

First there was *Breakout* (cue drum role), then there was *Arkanoid* (cue triumphal fanfare), then there was *Titan* (queue for the bus home).

VIZ (VIRGIN GAMES, £25.99)

This spunky game from Virgin (fnarr fnarr), has you racing the main characters from the hugely successful comic. It's not difficult to imagine what special powers are granted to contestants like Johnny Farpants and Buster Gonad, while Roger Mellie provides a suitably insulting commentary to keep the whole thing cracking along at a riotous pace. Unfortunately once the joke wears off there's precious little game left.

VOLFIED (EMPIRE, £25.99)

A competent reworking of the classic coin-op *Qix*, in which your objective is to guide a cursor round the screen in an attempt to paint more than 75% of it before you are killed by the strange creatures that occupy the increasingly small space that remains. *Volfied* has more colour, more variety and more levels than its predecessor.

WRATH OF THE DEMON (READYSOFT, £34.99)

Despite being older than some of the other Readysoft releases on this list, this is its best product to date. The plot is a typically naff rescue-the-princess-from-the-wicked-demon type affair, but some of the sub-games, all of which are beautifully animated, are actually quite playable. If you're fond of Readysoft's superb artwork, this is the one to go for.

ACTION/ADVENTURE

If, like most of the PC Zone team, you love adventure games but have poor reading and writing skills, then why not try adventures which demand a bit of good old fashioned joystick athleticism. These are games for the Conans of the computer world rather than the Sherlocks.

THIS MONTH'S CLASSIC:

ALONE IN THE DARK (INFOGRAMES, £44.99)

(See box-off for review)

Captive (Mindcape, £25.99)

Captive Map Generator [Requires *Captive*] (Mindcape, £8.99)

vert Action (MicroProse, £40.86)
mon Blue (Microvalue, £9.99)
Generation (Mindscap, £19.99)
e Of Horus (Addictive, £2.99)
ok (Ocean, £34.99)
ca (Coktel Vision, £44.99)
estation (Psychosis, £9.99)
aya (Addictive, £9.99)
e World of the Trolls
icrovalue, £25.99)
hales' Voyage (Microvalue, £29.99)

ADVENTURE

From the days of 'GO NORTH, FIGHT SQUIRREL, STEAL NUTS', adventures have advanced at aacking pace. Nowadays its not so much e plot that counts, more like the stars id the special effects. We've heard mours that Guybrush Threepwood is manding a cool \$6 million to star in a ird Monkey Island extravaganza. atch this space!

nazon (Access, £45.99)
y American Tail (Accolade, £29.99)
at 2 (Ubi Soft, £39.99)
nquest Of The Longbow
ierra On-Line, £39.99)
ime City (Impressions, £29.99)
rulse For A Corpse (Delphine, £30.99)
urse of Enchantia (Core Design, £34.99)
arkseed (Baze Marketing, £39.95)
arkseed (Cyberdreams, £39.99)
ternam (Infogrames, £35.99)
ree DC (US Gold, £34.99)
ateway (Accolade, £34.99)
eart Of China (Dynamix, £39.99)
itchhikers Guide to the Galaxy
irgin Games, £9.99)
ome Alone II (Accolade, £29.99)
his MONTH'S CLASSIC:
**INDIANA JONES AND THE FATE OF
PLANTIS - THE ADVENTURE GAME**
LUCASFILMS, £37.99)
(See box-off for review)

ings Quest IV (Sierra On-Line, £29.99)
ings Quest V (Sierra On-Line, £44.99)
ings Quest VI (Sierra On-Line, £44.99)
oom (LucasFilms, £35.75)
he Lost Files Of Sherlock Holmes
Electronic Arts, £39.99)
ure of the Temptress
irgin Games, £35.99)
lartian Memorandum (Access, £40.99)
peration Stealth (Delphine, £30.64)
lanets Edge - The Point Of No Return
New World Computing, £40.99)
olice Quest 1 (Sierra On-Line, £29.99)
olice Quest 2 (Sierra On-Line, £29.99)
olice Quest 3 (Sierra On-Line, £39.99)
west for Glory 1 (Sierra On-Line, £39.99)
west for Glory 3 (Sierra On-Line, £39.99)
lise Of The Dragon (Dynamix, £39.99)
he Secret Of Monkey Island
LucasFilms, £30.64)
he Secret Of Monkey Island 2 - Le
hucks Revenge (LucasFilms, £35.99)
herlock Holmes I [CD] (Mindscap, £59.99)
herlock Holmes II [CD]
Mindscap, £59.99)
pace Quest 1 (Sierra On-Line, £39.99)
pace Quest 4 (Sierra On-Line, £39.99)
pace Quest 5 (Sierra On-Line, £44.99)
tar Trek: 25th Anniversary
Electronic Arts, £34.99)
Faxworks (Accolade, £34.99)
Villy Beamish (Dynamix, £39.99)
ork (Virgin Games, £9.99)
ork II (Virgin Games, £9.99)
ork III (Virgin Games, £9.99)



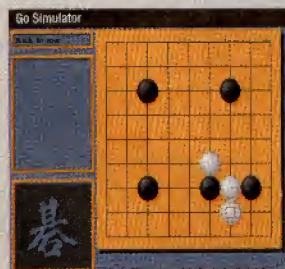
BEAT 'EM-UP/ HACK 'EM-UP

Let's face it, if you're one of those people who regularly gets sand kicked in your face by six year-olds, there's nothing better than getting home and working out your frustration with a quick game of *International Karate*. Provided you can persuade your kid sister to let you have your machine back without getting beaten up again.

Blade Warrior (Zeppelin, £7.99)
Budokan (Electronic Arts, £10.99)
Deathbringer (Empire, £25.99)
Double Dragon (Virgin Games, £9.99)
Double Dragon II (Virgin Games, £9.99)
THIS MONTH'S CLASSIC:
GOLDEN AXE (VIRGIN GAMES, £9.99)
(See box-off for review)
International Karate (Addictive £4.99)
Knight Force (Titus, £9.99)
Kung-Fu Warrior (Addictive, £9.99)
Madshow (Addictive, £2.99)
Manhattan Dealers (Addictive, £2.99)
Moonstone (Mindscap, £30.99)
Ninja Rabbits (Microvalue, £9.99)
Pitfighter (Domark, £29.99)
Wild Streets (Titus, £9.99)

BOARD & TABLE

Now what was that justification for paying twice as much for a computer board game as you'd pay for the original? Oh yes, there aren't any pieces to lose. Doesn't stop you from feeling stupid when you lug your PC round to the relatives at Christmas just so you can play *Trivial Pursuit* though!



Backgammon (Addictive, £4.99)
Deluxe Trivial Pursuit (Domark, £29.99)
Go Simulator (Infogrames, £30.99)
THIS MONTH'S CLASSIC:
HOYLE'S BOOK OF GAMES 3
(SIERRA ON-LINE, £39.99)
(See box-off for review)
Hong Kong Mah Jong
(Electronic Arts, £29.99)
Theatre of War (S60, £34.99)

CARD & CASINO

The great thing about gambling with a computer simulation is that you still come away feeling like a right jerk, but at least your pocket is only lighter by the price of the software!

Arcade Fruit Machine (Zeppelin, £7.99)
Bridge Player 2150 Galactic
(CP Software, £30.60)
Casino (Accolade, £29.99)
Hoyle's Book of Games
(Sierra On-Line, £39.99)
THIS MONTH'S CLASSIC:
CASINOS OF THE WORLD
(ACCOLADE, £34.99)
(See box-off for review)
Lots-O-Slots (Accolade, £14.99)
Omar Sharif's Bridge
(Oxford Softworks, £39.99)
Poker (Accolade, £14.99)

CHESS

So you think that Nigel Short is a pussycat huh? Wouldn't stand a chance against your infamous Double Sicilian Knight's Best Mate's Gambit Cop This Matey manoeuvre? Well you'd better get in practice for the next World Championship then hadn't you?

Battlechess (Electronic Arts, £10.99)
Battlechess II (Electronic Arts, £29.99)
Chess Champion 2175
(Oxford Softworks, £30.99)
THIS MONTH'S CLASSIC:
CHESSMASTER 2100
(MINDSCAPE, £25.99)
(See box-off for review)
Chessmaster 3000 (Mindscap, £35.99)
Chessmaster 3000 Multimedia [CD]
(Mindscap, £44.99)
Grandmaster Chess (Accolade, £34.99)
Grandslam Bridge II
(Electronic Arts, £39.99)
The Complete Chess System
(Oxford Softworks, £34.99)

COMPILATION/ DOUBLE PACK

Why pay 30 quid for one game when you can get five for the same price? Common sense dictates that, if you wait eight months, whatever game you're interested in will be available in a compilation. You won't wait though will you? Thought not!

5 Intelligent Strategy Games
(Oxford Softworks, £29.99)
360 Compilation (Mindscap, £59.99)
The Adventurers (Core Design, £34.99)
Air Commander (Ubi Soft, £39.99)
THIS MONTH'S CLASSIC:
AIR, LAND AND SEA
(ELECTRONIC ARTS, £39.99)
(See box-off for review)
Antheads & It Came From The Desert
(Beau Jolly, £12.99)
Arcade 1 (Addictive, £2.99)
Arcade Bonanza (Addictive, £4.99)
Award Winners (Empire, £29.99)
Bard's Tale Trilogy (Electronic Arts, £39.99)
The Big 100 (The Software
Business, £29.99)
Bimmap Brothers Volume 1
(Renegade, £29.99)
Casino Games Pack (Mindscap, £49.99)
CD Games Pack II (Mindscap, £89.99)
Club Casino (Addictive, £2.99)
Combat Classics (Empire, £34.99)
Excellent Games (Alternative, £14.99)
Fantastic Worlds (Ubi Soft, £34.99)
Fantasy Pak (Addictive, £4.99)
Fantasypak (Simarils, £29.99)
Games Compendium (Addictive, £2.99)
Head To Head (Domark, £39.99)
Intelligent Strategy Games 10
(Oxford Softworks, £39.99)
Magic Worlds (Simarils, £25.99)
Master Blaster (Addictive, £2.99)
Maze Adventure (Addictive, £4.99)
Mega Collection Compilation
(Microvalue, £12.99)
Nicks Picks (Sierra On-Line, £79.99)
Olympiad Collection (Microvalue, £9.99)
PC Games Collection (Domark, £39.99)
Powerpack II (Beau Jolly, £34.99)
Pro-League Baseball (Addictive, £4.99)
Psycho Soccer's Selection
(Ubi Soft, £34.99)
Rocket Ranger & TV Sports Football
(Beau Jolly, £12.99)
Sim City/Populous (Infogrames, £34.99)
Sinbad & Defender Of The Crown
(Beau Jolly, £12.99)
Soccer Stars (Empire, £25.99)
Space Battles (Addictive, £4.99)
Sporting Gold (US Gold, £30.64)
Sports Best (Loricels, £24.99)

CLASSIC BOARD & TABLE



HOYLE'S BOOK OF GAMES 3
(SIERRA ON-LINE, £29.99)
Based on the standard American reference work for games, this computerised package offers a selection of popular board games:

Backgammon, Checkers, Dominoes, Paschist, Snakes and Ladders, and Yacht. In case you don't recognise the names, let us assure you that the stranger sounding American games are nothing more ominous than Draughts, Ludo and the dice game that has been popularised over her as Yahtzee. The graphical quality of the whole package isn't exactly overwhelming, but there are some nice touches, like the option to change some of the playing pieces to a 'cuter' form which will appeal to younger players. It's not bad value, considering that you'd easily pay this amount for the individual games in their conventional form.

CLASSIC CARD & CASINO



CASINOS OF THE WORLD
(ACCOLADE, £34.99)
A bumper pack for gambling addicts. This is the latest compilation of Capstone's long list of casino simulations. It includes Vegas Gambler;

Monte Carlo Baccarat, and Trump Castle. None of these three collections, which include a range of card games, slot machine sims, roulette and so on, stands up particularly well on its own, but together they are excellent value for money if you're in the market for this sort of thing.

CLASSIC CHESS



CHESSMASTER 2100
(MINDSCAPE, £25.99)
This certainly isn't the most powerful chess game currently on the market, so why have we chosen it as a classic? Chessmaster 2100 is one of the few chess

programs that manages to balance the fine line between too many gimmicky features and not enough. It's a pretty friendly program which can actually play down to a level of complete incompetence, which is useful for the sort of people who lose their queen five minutes into a game and don't actually realise it's gone until five minutes before the end! It has a nice, clean display too. So, not too many bells and whistles, but a good buy for the beginner.

CLASSIC COMPILATION/DOUBLE PACK



AIR, LAND AND SEA
(ELECTRONIC ARTS, £39.99)

This compilation offers simulation fans an opportunity to sample some of the best simulations from yesteryear.

Stormovik: Soviet Attack Fighter SU-26 was the first simulation of a Soviet aircraft, and, while not being the best of its kind, is certainly a better effort than MiG-29 or MIG-29M. The popular 688 Attack Sub doesn't come anywhere near Silent Service II from MicroProse, but then it's an older game. It also concerns itself with modern nuclear-powered submarine rather than the old WWII crates in the former game. Finally Indianapolis 500: The Simulation completes the set. This was the first racing simulation that could claim to be realistic. It thrilled racing fans by using flight sim style technology. A good buy!

BUYER'S GUIDE

CLASSIC DRIVING/MOTOR RACING



GRAND PRIX (MICROPROSE, £44.99)

If you're a long-standing games player, you may well remember that Geoff Crammond was the man responsible for the much-acclaimed *Revs*, the first

racing simulation that could claim to be more than just a game. Now he's done it again by producing the most accurate simulation of Formula One racing currently available. It has to be said that the in-game graphics aren't the greatest you've ever seen, but then this isn't the sort of simulation in which you'll have plenty of time to admire the view. This is very recommended if you want a serious simulation rather than an action game.

CLASSIC FLIGHT, SUB & TANK SIM



AV8B HARRIER ASSAULT (DOMARK, £39.99)

Flight sim specialists Simis didn't score a big hit with their *MIG-29* and *MIG-29M* simulations, but they've got *AV8B* just right. Domark claim that this simulation has the

most accurate flight model ever used in a computer game. Are they right? How the hell should we know? We've never flown a Harrier! What we do know, however, is that it 'feels' right, and together with a strategy aspect, superb graphics and exciting combat, this adds up to the very best military based flight simulation released for the PC to date. Chuck out all your other flight sims and buy this.

CLASSIC KIDS' STUFF

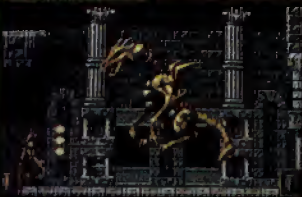


THE CASTLE OF DR. BRAIN (SIERRA ON-LINE, £34.99)

It has to be said that if there's one thing those Yankee games publishers are good at, it's coming to terms with the fact that children, even those

want to be educated, they want to be entertained. British publishers haven't really cottoned onto this principle yet, which is why most British educational software will have kiddies running screaming for their Game Boys. What us Brits ought to be doing is taking a good long look at the likes of *The Castle of Dr. Brain*. This looks at first sight, like any other Sierra adventure, complete with the standard SCI interface, but hidden beneath the fun and frolics are a series of maths and logic problems. The emphasis is on fun throughout and your kids will hardly realise that they're learning at the same time. Recommended if you don't mind your darling little ones being exposed to the occasional Americanism.

CLASSIC PLATFORM



GODS (RENEGADE, £34.99)

Love them or hate them, the Bitmap Brothers really know how to put playable games together, and this is one of their best. *Gods* borrows elements of other platform games, but adds a lot of new

features that you won't have seen before. There are intelligent enemies, some of which you need to interact with in clever ways to solve some of the puzzles, and after you've solved the puzzles that are essential to completing the level, you may find there are some tricks for gaining the extra bonus or two. The clever programming adjusts the level of difficulty dynamically depending on how well or badly you're doing. Brilliant.

Sports Masters (Empire, £34.99)
Sports Spectacular (Addictive, £2.99)
Strategy Games (Addictive, £4.99)
Strategy Masters (Ubi Soft, £34.99)
Strike Force (Addictive, £2.99)
The Three Stooges & King Of Chicago (Beau Jolly, £12.99)
Ultima Trilogy II (Origin, £39.99)

DRIVING/MOTOR RACING

If you've always fancied yourself as the sort of person who gives car insurance salesmen ideas of early retirement, but have never had it in you to do handbrake turns on the M25 in your Reliant Robin, the easiest ways to live your fantasy are listed below.

4D Sports Driving Classic (Mindscape, £19.99)
African Trail Simulator (Addictive, £9.99)
Car And Driver (Electronic Arts, £39.99)
Chicago '90 (Addictive, £2.99)
Crazy Cars 2 (Titus, £9.99)
Crazy Cars 3 (Titus, £29.99)
THIS MONTH'S CLASSIC:
GRAND PRIX (MICROPROSE, £44.99)
(See box-off for review)
Grand Prix 500 (Addictive, £2.99)
Grand Prix Unlimited (Accolade, £34.99)
Highway Patrol II (Addictive, £2.99)
Hot Rubber (Titus, £9.99)
Indy 500 (Electronic Arts, £29.99)
Ivan 'Iron Man' Stewart's Super Off



Mario Andretti's Racing Challenge
Road Racer (Virgin Games, £9.99)
Karting Grand Prix (Addictive, £2.99)
Mario Andretti's Racing Challenge (Electronic Arts, £29.99)
Stunt Driver (Digital Integration, £14.99)
Test Drive II: The Collection (Accolade, £34.99)
Turbo Outrun (US Gold, £30.64)

FLIGHT, SUB & TANK SIMS

Isn't it nice to be able to limp confidently into the officer's mess** and impress the girls from the WAAF*** with your tales of derring-do**** over the war-torn fields of France*****.

Your arthritis makes a good war wound substitute. **The dining room *Your wife ****You finally managed to shoot down that unarmed Fokker Triplane with your F-16. *****A quick game of Aces Over Europe.*

688 Attack Sub (Electronic Arts, £29.99)
A-10 Tank Killer (Dynamix, £39.99)
Abrams Battle Tank (Electronic Arts, £29.99)
Aces of the Pacific (Dynamix, £39.99)
Aces of the Pacific Mission Desk (Requires *Aces of the Pacific*) (Sierra On-Line, £24.99)
Aces Over Europe (Dynamix, £44.99)
Aircraft And Adventure Factory (Flight Simulator IV add-on) (Digital Integration, £39.99)
Atac (MicroProse, £44.99)
ATF II (Digital Integration, £9.99)
THIS MONTH'S CLASSIC:
AV8B HARRIER ASSAULT (DOMARK, £39.99)
(See box-off for review)

B-17 Flying Fortress (MicroProse, £44.99)
Birds Of Prey (Electronic Arts, £39.99)
Blue Max (Mindscape, £19.99)
Campaign (Empire, £39.99)
Chuck Yeager's Advanced Flight Trainer 2.0 (Electronic Arts, £10.99)
Chuck Yeager's Air Combat (Electronic Arts, £34.99)
Comanche - Maximum Overkill (Novologic, £45.99)
Das Boot (Mindscape, £19.99)
F-15 Strike Eagle (MicroProse, £22.47)
F-15 Strike Eagle II (MicroProse, £35.75)
F-15 Strike Eagle III (MicroProse, £44.99)
F-19 Stealth Fighter (MicroProse, £40.86)
F-29 Retaliator (Ocean, £34.99)
F-117A Stealth Fighter (MicroProse, £39.99)
Falcon (Digital Integration, £14.99)
Falcon 3.0 (MicroProse, £44.99)
Falcon 3.0 Mission Disk (Falcon 3.0 add-on) (MicroProse, £24.99)
Flight 685 (Flight Simulator IV add-on) (Digital Integration, £29.99)
Flight 701 (Flight Simulator IV add-on) (Digital Integration, £29.99)
Flight Of The Intruder (Digital Integration, £14.99)
Flight Planner (Flight Simulator IV add-on) (Digital Integration, £29.99)
FS Pro (Flight Simulator IV add-on) (Digital Integration, £29.99)
Grand Canyon (Flight Simulator IV Scenery Disk) (Digital Integration, £19.99)
Gunship (MicroProse, £35.75)
Gunship 2000 (MicroProse, £39.99)
Gunship 2000 Mission Disk (Requires *Gunship 2000*) (MicroProse, £24.99)
Harrier Jump Jet (MicroProse, £44.99)
Hawaii (Flight Simulator IV scenery disk) (Digital Integration, £19.99)
Heroes of the 357th (Electronic Arts, £34.99)
Interceptor (US Gold, £34.99)
Jetfighter 2 (US Gold, £24.99)
Jetfighter Special Edition (US Gold, £49.99)
Jump Jet (Addictive, £2.99)
Knights of the Sky (MicroProse, £40.86)
Lancaster (Addictive, £9.99)
LHX Attack Chopper (Electronic Arts, £39.99)
M1 Tank Platoon (MicroProse, £40.86)
Megafortress (Mindscape, £35.99)
Operation Sledgehammer (Requires *Megafortress*) (Mindscape, £19.99)
Pacific Islands (Empire, £34.99)
Red Baron (Dynamix, £39.99)
Red Baron Mission Desk (Requires *Red Baron*) (Dynamix, £24.99)
Red Storm Rising (MicroProse, £35.75)
Rescue 911 (Flight Simulator IV add-on) (Digital Integration, £29.99)
Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe (LucasFilms, £40.99)
Shuttle (Virgin Games, £49.99)
Silent Service (MicroProse, £25.53)
Silent Service II (MicroProse, £35.75)
Stormovik (Electronic Arts, £10.99)
Tahiti (Flight Simulator IV Scenery Disk) (Digital Integration, £19.99)
Tank (Digital Integration, £14.99)
Team Yankee (Empire, £34.99)
Their Finest Mission (Battle of Britain Mission Disk) (LucasFilms, £15.99)
Thunderhawk (Core Design, £34.99)
Tracon (Mindscape, £35.99)
Tracon II (Mindscape, £45.99)



KIDS' STUFF

Save the embarrassment of having to browse in the shop, by choosing your favourite 'edutainment' software from our buyer's guide. Now you'll no longer have to pay five year old to go into the shop with you just so you can buy yourself a copy of *Mickey's Jigsaw Puzzles*.

Are We There Yet (Electronic Arts, £29.99)
Bunny Bricks (Simarils, £25.99)
Cartooners (Electronic Arts, £29.99)
THIS MONTH'S CLASSIC:
THE CASTLE OF DR. BRAIN (SIERRA ON-LINE, £34.99)
(See box-off for review)

Eco Quest (Sierra On-Line, £34.99)
Eco Quest 2 (Sierra On-Line, £34.99)
Just Grandma And Me (CD) (Electronic Arts, £39.99)
The Incredible Machine (Sierra On-Line, £34.99)
The Island Of Dr. Brain (Sierra On-Line, £34.99)
Kid Cuts (Electronic Arts, £34.99)
Kid Pix (Electronic Arts, £34.99)
Kid Pix Companion (Electronic Arts, £25.99)
Mario Is Missing (Mindscape, £39.99)
Mario Teaches Typing (Electronic Arts, £29.99)
Mickey's ABCs (Disney, £25.99)
Mickey's 123s (Disney, £25.99)
Mickey's Colours and Shapes (Disney, £25.99)
Mickey's Jigsaw Puzzles (Disney, £25.99)
Mickey's Memory Challenge (Disney, £25.99)
Mixed Up Fairy Tales (Sierra On-Line, £34.99)
Mixed Up Mother Goose (Sierra On-Line, £34.99)
Numbers Up (Mindscape, £52.88)
Playroom (Infogrames, £25.99)
Postman Pat III (Alternative, £7.99)
Putt Putt Joins The Parade (CD) (Electronic Arts, £29.99)
Quarky & Quasoo's Turbo Science (Sierra On-Line, £34.99)
Red Dog And Charlie Go Camping (Sierra On-Line, £39.99)
Sooty & Sweep (Alternative, £7.99)
Thomas the Tank Engine and Friends (Alternative, £7.99)
The Tree House (Broderbund, £39.99)
Twisty History (Sierra On-Line, £34.99)
Where in America's Past is Carmen Sandiego? (Broderbund, £34.44)
Where in the USA is Carmen Sandiego? (Broderbund, £34.99)
Where in the USA is Carmen Sandiego? - Deluxe Edition (Broderbund, £45.99)
Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego? (Broderbund, £34.99)
Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego? - Deluxe Edition (Broderbund, £59.99)
Where in Time is Carmen Sandiego? (Broderbund, £34.99)

PLATFORM

The PC has always had something of a reputation for cerebral games rather than the good old fashioned platform capers that the other machines tend to attract. Now, however, the tide seems to be turning and, as is demonstrated below, platform fans are beginning to be catered for in a big way.

Baal (Psygnosis, £9.99)
The Blues Brothers (Titus, £25.99)
Catch 'Em (DMI, £29.99)
Cool Croc Twins (Empire, £25.99)
Cool World (Ocean, £29.99)
Eit (Ocean, £29.99)
Fantasy World Dizzy (Codemasters, £9.99)
First Samurai (Ubi Soft, £30.99)

THIS MONTH'S CLASSIC:

IDS (RENEGADE, £34.99)

(see box-off for review)

Gold Of The Aztecs (US Gold, £30.99)

Inner Boy (Addictive, £9.99)

1001 Games 2 (Millennium, £25.99)

Logic Pockets (Renegade, £30.99)

Shistorik (Titus, £9.99)

Prince Of Persia (Domark, £24.99)

Spectator (Addictive, £4.99)

Sky Woods (Electronic Arts, £29.99)

boCod (Millennium, £25.99)

ryx (Psygnosis, £9.99)

per Cauldron (Titus, £29.99)

us The Fox (Titus, £25.99)

stan (Colorado Technologies, £34.99)

HIGHLIGHTED THIS ISSUE

PUZZLE

Puzzle games tend to divide into two types. There are those like *Puzznic* which almost entirely involve brainwork, and there are those like *Tetris* which require fast reaction times as well. The PC has become a ritable breeding ground for puzzle games, and the current selection should grow at a rate of knots.

RCHPELAGOS (ADDICTIVE, £2.99)

A early release from the now defunct development team Astral Software, this game would definitely qualify for inclusion in the Bizarre category. However, since we can't have a Bizarre category (for fear that arped people will start sending us their own programming efforts for consideration) we've stuck it here instead. You must conquer 10,000 islands by destroying a nuclear installation on each one. This is achieved by growing new bits of island to link up particular points. Said it was strange!

TOMINO (PSYGNOSIS, £34.99)

A life an addictive, and naturally very respectable puzzler from the Liverpool folk. The objective is to link up sub-atomic particles to make different elements. It won't turn you into a great chemist, but it's a reasonable way to spend an evening or two.

BOULDERDASH (ADDICTIVE, £2.99)

A classic fast and furious puzzle in which you have to dig for diamonds while avoiding being crushed by falling rocks and diamonds, and avoiding the monsters that travel along the tunnels you create. Much imitated, but still worth having, especially at this price.

BOULDERDASH 2 (ADDICTIVE, £2.99)

More of the same. Worth buying if you wouldn't get enough of the first one.

RIX 2 (ADDICTIVE, £2.99)

Cheap, but interesting variant on the *breakout* theme. Different patterns of bricks are arranged in the centre of the screen and you control bats on all four sides.

HIPS CHALLENGE (US GOLD, £25.99)

A wide a little chappie through 140 levels of very good puzzles in which you must negotiate changing barriers and patrolling monsters. Pricey, but good fun nonetheless.

REEPERS (PSYGNOSIS, £39.99)

Anyone has the right to rip off *Lemmings*, it's Psygnosis. To be honest, while this game has similar objectives - solve the puzzles to get your creepers safely to the end of each screen - it seems aimed at a slightly younger market, with larger, more colourful graphics and no simplistic game play.

CONTRAPTIONS (MINDSCAPE, £19.99)

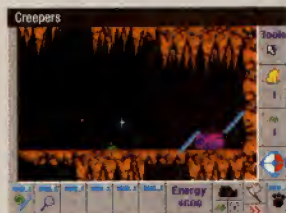
Play Zack the repairman as he fulfils your stereotypical visions of mechanics, and hops round levels trying to find his tools so he can repair a huge machine. Naturally this all happens after he tells you he hasn't got the right part, sobs off home saying he'll be back tomorrow, turns up three weeks later, makes a complete cock-up of the whole job and tells you for three times the original estimate.

GOBLINS (COKTEL VISION, £25.99)

With three Goblins at your disposal, each of which has a different function, your objective is to solve the puzzle you are presented with on each screen. Once you've got used to the crummy interface this is quite absorbing, but a bit over-priced for what it is.

GOBLINS II (COKTEL VISION, £29.99)

Has overcome some of the original's sticky control problems, while retaining the humour and introducing more good puzzles.



HARE RAISING HAVOC (DISNEY, £25.99)

Plenty to offer in the sound and graphics department, especially if you have a *Disney Sound Source* or *Sound Blaster* compatible device. You must solve a number of puzzles in each room so that Roger can escape and rescue his charge, Baby Herman. Great fun for a while, but it's very linear and the novelty soon wears off.

HARE RAISING HAVOC [INCLUDING THE DISNEY SOUND SOURCE] (DISNEY, £54.99)

The same game, but including Disney's cheap sound add-on.

THE HUMANS (MIRAGE, £29.99)

One of the many puzzle games to capitalise on the success of *Lemmings*, this platform based puzzler, in which you have to perform a series of tasks by manipulating a tribe of early humans and the tools they find is marred by an unfriendly and overly complicated control system.

THIS MONTH'S CLASSIC:

LEMMINGS (PSYGNOSIS, £34.99)

LEMMINGS DOUBLE PACK (PSYGNOSIS, £39.99)

(See box-off for reviews)

NEVER MIND (PSYGNOSIS, £9.99)

A very strange puzzle game in which you must rearrange tiles to form a picture (which is animated in the later levels). The tiles are manoeuvred by a man who is subject to rather strange gravitational forces, so that he can actually walk upright on any face of the three-dimensional playing area. A good buy at this price.

PUSHOVER (OCEAN, £29.99)

A very addictive puzzle game generated through Ocean's tie-in with Quavers crisps. Strangely, the hero is not Colin Curly, but an oversized, upright, super-intelligent ant (no doubt imported from Sheffield), who has to rearrange dominoes so that, when pushed, they fall down in such a fashion that one falls on the target area.

PUZZNIC (OCEAN, £29.99)

Some of Ocean's best games have been its puzzle programs, and this early effort is no exception. Patterned tiles must be manoeuvred so that pairs of matching tiles meet up and then disappear. The trick is not being left with any odd tiles at the end of a level, and a tight time limit keeps you on your toes. Moving platforms and the need to remove several tiles simultaneously make later levels quite challenging.

QUADRALIEN (ADDICTIVE, £2.99)

A budget re-release of another classic Logotron game. You must manoeuvre your six droids through the puzzle-oriented levels to shutdown a nuclear reactor. Not brilliant, but worth a look at this price.

SARAKON (VIRGIN GAMES, £19.99)

A very addictive puzzle game based around the tile set from *Mah Jong*, only this version is a solitaire game in which tiles must be matched before being removed from the playing field.

SUPAPLEX (DIGITAL INTEGRATION, £7.99)

One of the best of the recent batch of *Boulderdash* clones. There are some nice additions to this version, like remotely exploded bombs and one way tunnels. The puzzles are also a lot more intricate than in many *Boulderdash*-type games.

SUPER TETRIS (MICROPROSE, £34.99)

The wonder programmer from Russia with the unpronounceable name wowed everyone in the West with the classic, *Tetris*, and has since managed to make money by rewriting the same game about a half-dozen times with different themes. The latest one just takes the original game and makes it more complicated. Opinion as to whether the additional gameplay actually improves the game is divided.

SWAP (TITUS, £9.99)

So-so puzzle game involving the manipulation of tiles with various shapes.

TETRIS (INFOGRAMES, £24.99)

Possibly the most successful computer game of all time. Quite what is so appealing about this game of falling blocks is difficult to determine, but there's no doubt that its simple but addictive gameplay has a great many people hooked.

WEEN (COKTEL VISION, £34.99)

A novel cross between adventure and puzzle games. While this has an overall rescue-the-princess-and-save-the-land theme, the puzzles are very linear and location based and each must be solved before you can move on to another location, so this doesn't really qualify as a proper adventure game. It will appeal to people who enjoy lateral thinking, but others may find it frustrating.



WORDTRIS (MICROPROSE, £34.99)

Just when you thought you'd seen the last of those Russian 'tris games, along comes another in which the falling blocks are letter tiles from which you must construct proper words for points. Good practise for *Scrabble* enthusiasts.

ZYCONIX (ACCOLADE, £24.99)

Another *Tetris* clone, this time based on lining up coloured blocks. The new twist is that special objects fall from the top of the screen and can be caught for power-ups, although some have harmful effects and are to be avoided.

ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

Role-playing games have their roots in a table-top tradition that extends back to the late sixties

when the now legendary Gary Gygax began putting his mind to creating the first rule set for *Dungeons and Dragons*. This and many other rule sets like *Tunnels and Trolls* and *Runequest* now have a huge following. Computer versions add a new visual aspect to the games, and make them really accessible to solo players or small groups.

Bard's Tale Construction Set

(Electronic Arts, £29.99)

Bard's Tale III (Electronic Arts, £10.99)

Buck Rogers Countdown To Doomsday (SSI, £34.99)

Buck Rogers 2: Matrix Club (SSI, £30.99)

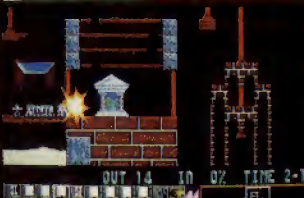
Champions Of Krynn (SSI, £30.64)

Corporation (Core Design, £34.99)

The Curse Of The Azure Bonds

(SSI, £30.64)

CLASSIC PUZZLE



LEMMINGS

(PSYGNOSIS, £34.99)

Why oh why oh why oh why is it that people who play this absolutely superb puzzle game from the well known Scots laddie David McLemming and his crew at DMA design,

always get the whole thing muddled up. Everybody seems to think that the idea is to save the little blighters. How completely, utterly and totally wrong! That's no fun at all. No, the real joy of this game is finding the number of different ways you can make the little sods go splat! Our particular favourite is getting them to build a huge staircase and then making them explode in a glorious shower of lemming bits just as they reach the top. Lovely! Still, if you're a bit perverted you could always try getting as many of them home as possible. However you play it this is easily the best puzzle game ever, so buy it...

LEMMINGS DOUBLE PACK (PSYGNOSIS, £39.99)

... or better still, get this pack which also has the extra levels from *Oh No! More Lemmings*.

CLASSIC ROLE PLAYING GAMES



DAUGHTER OF SERPENTS

(MILLENNIUM, £39.99)

A new game which has undeservedly been ignored by most computer magazines. It introduces a new role-playing system (there is even a table-top version included in the box

as a bonus), but its appeal comes from an intuitive interface and superb graphics. The plot isn't exactly original - Strange goings-on in Egypt hint at an ancient and evil power revived - but this is well worth a look if you are tired of the other systems.

CLASSIC SERIOUS SOFTWARE



THE MIRACLE PIANO

TEACHING SYSTEM

[INCLUDES ELECTRIC PIANO]

(MINDSCAPE, £299.99)

While the *Miracle* system may seem a bit pricey, it's worth remembering that you'd pay close to this price just for a

good keyboard anyway, and you'd be lucky to find Piano lessons for under £15 an hour these days. If that wasn't reason enough to consider investing in a *Miracle*, then let us assure you that, provided you are prepared to practice regularly, this system really does work. In no time at all you'll be ready to punish family and friends with endless renditions of Chopsticks and Ragtime.

CLASSIC SHOOT 'EM UP



RAMPART (ELECTRONIC

ARTS, £29.99)

We just know that we are going to get at least one letter from a reader claiming that *Rampart* is more of a puzzle game than a shoot 'em-up. The fact of the matter is that it

has elements of both, but the shoot 'em-up is the fun part. The idea is to build a castle and then knock ten shades of hell out of the opposition's fortifications. After each round, you are offered a selection of irregular *Tetris* like pieces with which to rebuild your damaged castle as best you can. A great two player game.

BUYER'S GUIDE

CLASSIC SMUT!



REX NEBULAR AND THE COSMIC GENDER BENDER (MICROPROSE, £44.99)

This first foray for MicroProse into the graphic adventure market isn't quite as base as it sounds. The humour is all in fairly good taste and innuendo is far more in evidence than naked flesh. The adventure is like a cross between *Space Quest* and *Leisure Suite Larry* and has the hero of the piece, Rex Nebular, crash landing on a planet populated entirely by nymphomaniacs. The humour doesn't quite hit the mark throughout, but this is a good beginning for MicroProse nonetheless.

CLASSIC SPACE COMBAT/STRATEGY



ELITE PLUS (MICROPROSE, £39.99)

Purists may well prefer to sample David Braben's classic game in its unadulterated form, but for those of us who are prepared to be sacrilegious, Chris Sawyer's

update, which includes smooth filled-polygon graphics and better presentation is a worthy way to sample one of the best games ever written. *Elite* has stood the test of time surprisingly well and has yet to be surpassed in terms of size, depth of gameplay and mixture of strategy and action. Whether *Elite II* lives up to its predecessor's reputation remains to be seen.

CLASSIC SPORT



DAVID LEADBETTER'S GOLF (MICROPROSE, £44.99)

PGA Tour Golf used to be far and away the best golf game to be had on any machine, but frankly, against *David Leadbetter's Golf, PGA Tour Golf* looks like Jimmy Tarbuck

trying to contend with Nick Faldo. It's not just the huge range of options that make this so good, (many people may not want to be bothered with adjusting their stance for instance), it's just that MicroProse have come up with a superb control system that allows you to very accurately place shots if you understand all the factors involved. It doesn't look quite as pretty as *Links*, but then the screen updates in five seconds rather than 30. Highly recommended.

CLASSIC STRATEGY & WARGAME



CIVILIZATION (MICROPROSE, £39.99)

If ever there was a game that proves that if the gameplay is right it doesn't really matter about the graphics and sound, then this is it. It's got pretty crappy presentation

throughout, but that doesn't stop it from being the best strategy game to have emerged for years. The concept is to lead your people from the dawn of civilisation to the space age, and be the first to colonise a new planet. You begin with one unarmed tribe with which you must establish your first city, then through exploration, research, and warfare you discover new lands, establish new cities and develop new technologies. It's vast and each game takes many hours to complete but it's incredibly absorbing. A must buy.

Dark Half (Accolade, £29.99)
Darklands (MicroProse, £49.99)
The Dark Queen Of Krynn (SSI, £32.99)

THIS MONTH'S CLASSIC: DAUGHTER OF SERPENTS (MILLENNIUM, £39.99)

(See box-off for review)

Death Knights Of Krynn (SSI, £30.99)
Dragon Wars (Interplay, £29.99)
Dungeon Master (Psygnosis, £34.99)
Eye Of The Beholder 2 - The Legend Of Dark Moon (SSI, £35.99)
Fireking (SSG, £29.99)
Forge Of Virtue (Electronic Arts, £19.99)
The Gateway To The Savage Frontier (SSI, £39.99)
Hard Nova (Electronic Arts, £29.99)
Heimdall (Core Design, £34.99)
Hillstar (SSI, £25.53)
The Immortal (Electronic Arts, £29.99)
Ishar (Simarils, £29.99)
Legend (Mindscape, £30.99)
Legends Of Valour (US Gold, £39.99)
Lord Of The Rings (Electronic Arts, £34.99)
Magic Candle (Mindcraft, £29.99)
Magic Candle II (Mindcraft, £34.99)
Megatraveller 1 (Empire, £34.99)
Megatraveller 2 (Empire, £34.99)
Might And Magic 2 (New World Computing, £30.64)
Might And Magic 3 - Isles Of Terra (New World Computing, £40.99)
Obiturn (Psygnosis, £34.99)
Pool Of Darkness (SSI, £30.99)
Prophecy Of The Shadow (SSI, £32.99)
The Secret Of The Silver Blades (SSI, £30.63)
Shadow Sorcerer (SSI, £30.99)



Space 1989 (Empire, £34.99)
Spell Jammer (SSI, £35.99)
The Summoning (SSI, £35.99)
Treasure Of The Savage Frontier (SSI, £32.99)
Twilight 2000 (Empire, £39.99)
Ultima Underworld (Origin, £39.99)
Ultima VI (Origin, £19.99)
Ultima VII (Origin, £39.99)
Valhalla (Storm Computers Ltd, £34.99)

SERIOUS SOFTWARE

Despite the fact that we are unashamedly a PC games magazine, we do recognise that every now and then even the most avid games player wants to use his or her PC for recreating a favourite Magritte, or researching a planned literary masterpiece, so below you'll find all the software you could possibly want for getting the job done.

3D Construction Kit (Domark, £49.99)
Animals [CD] (Mindscape, £58.73)
Atlas Pack (Mindscape, £105.74)
Back Up Pro (Mindscape, £46.99)
Bannermania (Electronic Arts, £25.99)
Deluxe Paint Animation (Electronic Arts, £99.99)
Deluxe Paint II Enhanced (Electronic Arts, £99.99)
DS Recover Classic (Mindscape, £19.99)
DS Squeeze (Mindscape, £52.99)
Form Filler Gold (Mindscape, £82.24)
Grolier Encyclopaedia 1991 [CD] (Mindscape, £346.63)
Kara Fonts (Electronic Arts, £49.99)
Laffer Utilities (Sierra On-Line, £34.99)
Mammals [CD] (Mindscape, £116.33)

Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing (Mindscape, £30.55)
Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing II (Mindscape, £35.99)
Memory Mate (Broderbund, £44.99)
Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing Multimedia [CD] (Mindscape, £44.99)

THIS MONTH'S CLASSIC: THE MIRACLE PIANO TEACHING SYSTEM (INCLUDES ELECTRIC PIANO) (MINDSCAPE, £299.99)

(See box-off for review)

The New Print Shop (Electronic Arts, £34.99)
Office Manager Classic (Mindscape, £19.99)
PC Globe (Electronic Arts, £39.99)
The Presidents [CD] (Mindscape, £117.44)
Reference Library (Mindscape, £117.44)
Soundworks (Mindscape, £25.99)
Timetable of History [CD] (Mindscape, £116.32)
Toolworks Back Up Pro (Mindscape, £52.86)
Toolworks Lengthwise (Mindscape, £41.13)
US Atlas (Mindscape, £69.33)
Word For Word (Mindscape, £41.13)
Word For Word Pro (Mindscape, £116.33)
Word For Word Version 5 (Mindscape, £116.32)
World Atlas (Mindscape, £81.88)
World Atlas Version 2 (Mindscape, £70.99)
World Atlas Version 3 (Mindscape, £70.49)
World Atlas Version 3 [CD] (Mindscape, £105.69)

SHOOT 'EM-UP

An area in which the PC has struggled to attract new games, but software publishers are finally realising that even brainy PC owners like a bit of mindless violence to unwind to every now and again.

Arac (Addictive, £2.99)
Bad Company (Addictive, £2.99)
Battle Command (Ocean, £29.99)
Battlestorm (Titus, £9.99)
Blood Money (Psygnosis, £9.99)
Dalek Attack (Alternative, £16.99)
Dick Tracy (Disney, £30.99)
Dogs Of War (Electronic Arts, £14.99)
Fire And Forget (Titus, £9.99)
Fire And Forget 2 (Titus, £9.99)
Freddy Hardest (Addictive, £9.99)
Game Over (Addictive, £9.99)
The Godfather (US Gold, £30.00)
Mayday Squad Heroes (Microvalue, £9.99)
Mega-Phoenix (Addictive, £9.99)
Menace (Psygnosis, £9.99)
Monty Python's Flying Circus (Virgin Games, £9.99)
Nova 9 (Sierra On-Line, £29.99)
Operation Hornum (Alternative, £7.99)
Phantasm (Addictive, £2.99)

THIS MONTH'S CLASSIC: RAMPART (ELECTRONIC ARTS, £29.99)

(See box-off for review)

Star Goose (Addictive, £2.99)
Strike II (Millennium, £30.99)
Super Space Invaders (Domark, £29.99)
Turn 'n' Burn (Microvalue, £9.99)
Xenon (Virgin Games, £9.99)

SMUT!

It's beyond us why anyone would want to spend £30 for badly digitised photos of naked women when they can get better quality from the top shelf of W.H.Smith for £3, but if this is your kind of thing... have you got a copy of *Daily Sport Covergirl Poker* we can borrow for a couple of days?

Daily Sport Covergirl Poker (Storm, £29.99)
Fascination (Coktel Vision, £35.99)
Leather Goddesses of Phobos (Virgin Games, £9.99)

Leisure Suit Larry 1 (Sierra On-Line, £39.99)
Leisure Suit Larry 5 (Sierra On-Line, £39.99)
Les Manley in: Lost In LA (Accolade, £19.99)

THIS MONTH'S CLASSIC: REX NEBULAR AND THE COSMIC GENDER BENDER (MICROPROSE, £44.99)

(See box-off for review)

Spellcasting 201: The Sorcerer's Appliance (Accolade, £19.99)
Spellcasting 301: Spring Break (Accolade, £34.99)

SPACE COMBAT AND STRATEGY

Never mind the fact that games designers seem to have no idea about the physics of outer space than film makers, space based shoot 'em-ups have had a firm following ever since David Braben created the grand-daddy of them all, *Elite*. Now the *Elite 2* is imminent, you might want to wait before buying one, but if you're anxious for a tussle with a tentacled tourist from Tau Ceti then peruse the list below.

Elite (MicroProse, £25.53)
THIS MONTH'S CLASSIC: ELITE PLUS (MICROPROSE, £39.99)
(See box-off for review)
Epic (Ocean, £34.99)
Hyperspeed (MicroProse, £44.99)
Mantis (MicroProse, £49.99)
Secret Missions I [Wing Commander I add-on] (Origin, £19.99)
Secret Missions II [Wing Commander I add-on] (Origin, £19.99)



Star Control II [Wing Commander I data disk] (Origin, £19.99)
Special Operations I [Wing Commander I data disk] (Origin, £19.99)
Special Operations II [Wing Commander I data disk] (Origin, £19.99)
Speech Accessory Pack [Wing Commander II add-on] (Origin, £17.99)
Star Control II (Accolade, £34.99)
Wing Commander I (Origin, £19.99)
Wing Commander I Deluxe Edition (Origin, £45.99)
Wing Commander II (Origin, £39.99)

SPORT

Inform Christie is a bit of a fun old geezer, isn't he. He gets up at ridiculous hours of the morning in the freezing cold, to train for a race, he doesn't eat crappy food from MacDonald's, prefers orange juice to fizzy drinks, he's got a copy of *Summer Challenge*, then he could go out boozing with his mates, come back roaring drunk after eating two packets of greasy chips and a dodgy kebab, and still be in good enough condition for a 100 metre sprint.

4D Sports Boxing Classic (Mindscape, £19.99)
Advantage Tennis (Infogrames, £30.99)
Armchair Quarterback (Addictive, £4.99)
Barton Creek - Championship Course [Links Course Disk] (Access, £22.99)
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STRATEGY AND WARGAME

At last we come to the section that the PC was made for. Strategy games, probably by virtue of the fact that they don't always need pretty graphics and stunning sound, have been around since the very first PC was launched back in 1981. Whether your taste is for recreating Napoleon's greatest moments, or establishing your own rail network, you'll find it all here.

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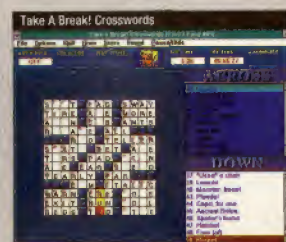
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WINDOWS

Not an ad column for double glazing, but a means by which that rapidly growing group of DOSophobes can still get their gaming kicks. Everything in this list is designed specifically to be run under Microsoft Windows.

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 (Sierra On-Line, £24.99)
Visions (Mindscape, £34.99)



CLASSIC WINDOWS



MICROSOFT GOLF
(MICROSOFT, £42.50)
 Players of *Links* will instantly note a similarity between that game and Microsoft's. They are of course the same, only this version is designed specifically to run under

Windows. Naturally, all of the course disks that are available for *Links* will work with *Microsoft Golf* too. This is a very attractive game, which will appeal to *Windows* using golf fans... until MicroProse bring out a *Windows* version of *David Leadbetter's Golf* at least.

MINI COMPO



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- BANANOID (VGA)** Break Out type game with a scrolling screen.
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- JIM (Text)** Humorous text adventure. Get Jim through his trials meanwhile coping with his mysterious friend Alan.
- SG (EGA/VGA)** Star Goose like the arcade game Zaxxon. Fly over the 3D landscape shooting mines and picking up fuel, shields and ammunition.
- DARKAGES (EGA/VGA)** Pick up the objects by jumping and running around the colourful screens avoiding the flying beetles. 21 levels.
- DOUBLINK (CGA/EGA/VGA)** Tetris like game but you have to line up the correct colours to defeat the meanies.
- GOAL (CGA/EGA/VGA)** You are the manager of a 4th division football club of your choice. Can you cope with all aspects of football team management and take your team to the top of the first division?
- SHERLOCK (EGA/VGA/Mouse)** A game of deduction: you must determine the locations of 36 blocks. Single person/tournament options.
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- ANTI-VIRUS DISK** Also included with the selection is an anti-Virus disk. The files on this disk are the latest releases of the McAfee Associates virus detection and clean up utilities dated October 1992. Over 1300 viruses and variants are detected. There is also a list of all the variants and a brief description of what they do.

IMPORTANT

The disks are only available as a complete 5 disk package and cannot be purchased individually. The disk set costs £19.95 and is inclusive of package and postage and VAT. This offer applies to the UK only.

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- MEGANS MATCH** Pelmanism memory game.
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- CALCULATION SOLITAIRE** High quality solitaire card game.

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- HEXTRIS** Hexagonal Tetris game.
- KYE2b** Brilliant puzzle game.
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- MISSILE** Missile attack game.
- POKER** Draw poker.
- PUZZLE** A puzzle game. Blimey!
- REVERSI** Reversi/Othello.
- TOBOR** Tobor - clear the screen of Tobors.
- WFBALLII** American Football game.
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- WINSOLIT** Solitaire (Ver 92.01.04).

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Leisure 7

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- DEAPSEA** Battleships.
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- ISHIDO** Tiles game.
- LIGHT** Electric light game.
- MB** Mile Bones Automobile card game.
- MRMIND** Tile/Bagel/Mastermind game for Windows.
- PATMN** Collect all the pills in the labyrinth.
- PEGPUZL** A peg-jumping puzzle.
- WHEARTS** Hearts card game.
- WINTREK2** WinTrek 2.0 game.
- WINTRIS** Yet another Tetris game.

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PRICE £4.50

This disk contains about 50 example files showing how to use the WGT library for Turbo C++ 1.0 or better. DETAILED example include a Pacman like game, Space Invaders, a top view dungeon game, a side view platform game, and much more...

The library includes a sprite editor and an animation library for sprites and 4-way scrolling. Everything you require to write your own action games.. Requires Turbo C++ and 1.3 Mb of disk space.

TO EXTRACT THE FILES:

- 1) Make a directory on your hard disk - "MD CWGT"
- 2) Make your current directory - "C:" and "CDWGT"
- 3) Then, if your floppy is A: type "A:" and then "Extract A" or if your floppy is B: type "B:" and then "Extract B" (The EXTRACT batch file takes the floppy drive as an argument. Read the Documentation carefully. There is a lot of it. You may find that you have to change the default directories in the .PRJ files. You may also have to make the directory path something like ".;C:\TC\INCLUDE" so that the current directory is checked first.

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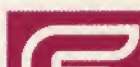
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PCW 04/93



Mr Cursor

HE'S AFRAID OF HIS PC



BEING AS this is my first column and this is the first issue of *PC Zone*, I suppose introductions are in order... but they'll have to wait, because I want to tell you about my recent holiday in the Dordogne: a holiday arranged by my art teacher, Graham. I'm in his fine art group, see – twice a week myself and six others turn up at his flat, assemble our easels in his front room and paint pictures of Angela. She's Graham's model and he pays her three pounds an hour to take her clothes off. It's brilliant. Anyway, I digress. As I was saying, I went on this holiday to the

Dordogne... in fact we all did, the whole art group. We travelled, via the Dover/Calais crossing, in Graham's camper van, with tents, sleeping bags and painting equipment stashed away under the seats at the back. Graham felt we'd all drawn far too many pictures of Angela in the buff and wanted us to start learning about landscapes instead. And we did. Or rather they did... the rest of the group did. I personally – as you'll see in a second – had other, slightly more pressing matters on my mind. My mind wasn't exactly on the French countryside. You'll know what I mean as soon as you clap eyes on the three paintings I produced over the course of those five wind swept days.

So there you have it. Five days in the Dordogne, and I never even got to draw a tree. It's all thanks to my PC, you see... it keeps going wrong; I don't understand why; I try to fix it but can't; it's constantly on my mind; and so on. This sort of 'pc panic' disorder is why I picked up the nickname Mr Cursor in the first place - there's a folder on my machine which I have called just that, Mr Cursor. It's where I 'hide' umpteen backups of all the files that scare me. Such as? Files such as? Well how about the autoexec.bat for starters. To me it's something of a closed book. And there's the config.sys of course, which is probably even worse. And the list of scary files doesn't stop after those two, because when it comes right down to it every single file in DOS sends shivers running down my spine. All I want to do is play games, but it's not that simple - as I've found out. Teccy Species will be laughing at me, I know, but I'm not alone... loads of people these days buy their PC purely as a games machine. (And if you *are* one of these people, then hello and welcome to the column designed specifically with you in mind. My column. Mr Cursor).

```
C:\chkdsk
Volume MS-DOS5 created 02-03-1990 1:36p
Volume Serial Number is 0043-6680
Errors Found, F parameter not specified
Corrections will not be written to disk

C:\uW2
Invalid sub-directory entry
>
C:\dir/w
Invalid sub-directory entry
```

I call this one "F Parameter not specified"

```
C:\darklands > del *.*  
Sector not found  
Abort Retry Fail  
Sector not found  
Abort Retry Fail  
Sector not found  
Abort Retry Fail  
Sector no**$8ff00!!!!*$E0!$99_...02$@e$vx
```

And this is called "System lock up".

```
C:\mem
Self destruct sequence initiated...
Commencing countdown...
C:\no please, stop, stop!!!
Too late...
20
19
18
17
16
15
14
Sector not found
```

This is an impressionist approach, titled "Oh no!!"

Mr Cursor's Flow Of Consciousness s Bit

Annoying things about my PC

The On/Off switch is so close to the disk eject button that in moments of tiredness (*I think we know what that means. Ed*) problems arise. For instance, installing a twelve disk mega game. The installation of disks one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten and eleven invariably goes fine, but then it's finally "Insert disk 12 and press any key" time. Simple enough? No, actually. While reaching out to eject disk eleven a confused index finger can so easily wander towards the On/Off switch and trigger total system shutdown.

The cure? It's obvious. There should be *two* on/off switches. Hit one and a digitised voice says "Are you absolutely sure you want to turn your PC off?" Hit the other in confirmation and a different digitised voice says "Are you absolutely, 100%, totally sure about this? Have you no doubts *anywhere* in your mind?" Then a second push of the first button would do the closing down business. (Unless you *had* made a mistake, of course).

Scary moments with my PC

- 1) Trying to make *Links 386 Pro* actually work.
- 2) The noise the hard drive suddenly made at 9.45 last Thursday evening.
- 3) ROM BIOS, just looking at it.

Over to you

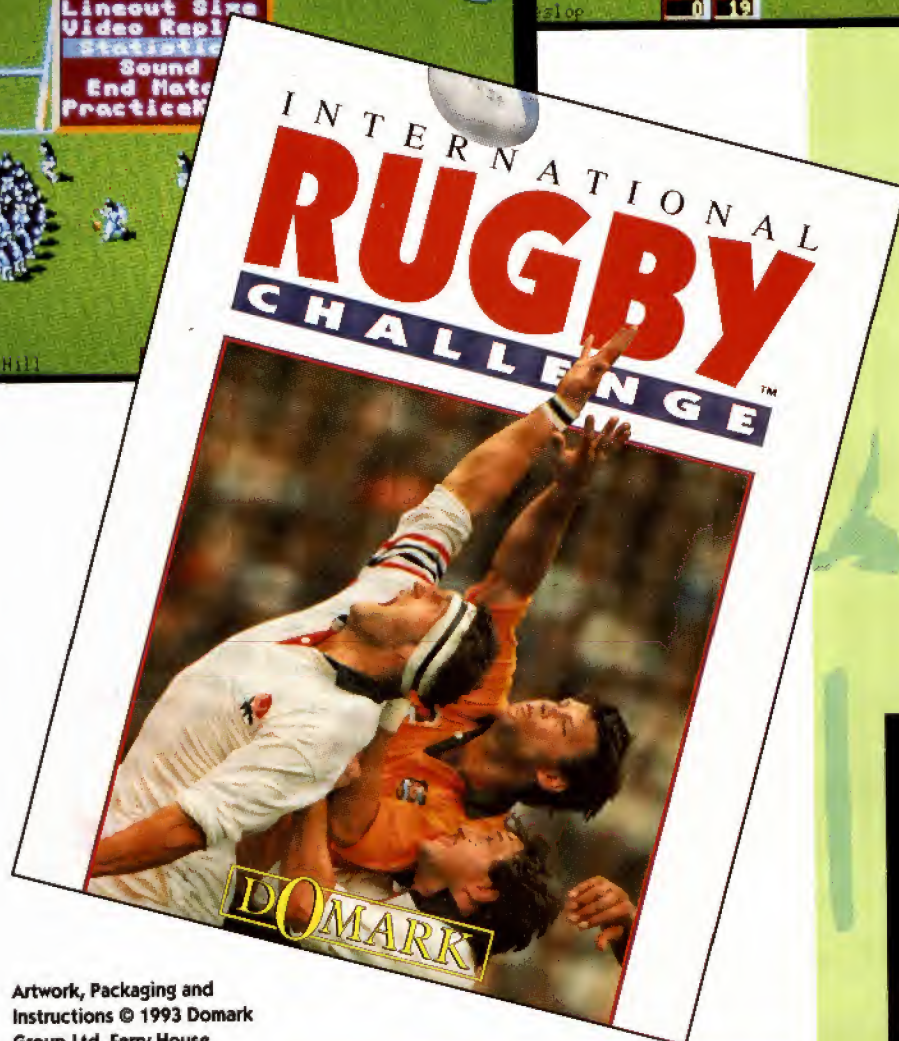
I've only got one page here, meaning not much room for correspondence, but if *you're* scared of your PC then drop me a line. I'll be offering no solutions whatsoever, as I'm sure you *will* appreciate, but what I *will* be able to supply is empathy and moral support. And that's what counts. Let's all be wimps together.

Next Month

I'll tell you how I think a hard drive probably works... diagrams and everything.

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IBM PC Screenshots

GET READY 4 THE INVASION

COMIC RELIEF
HAVE AT LAST
GRASPED THE FACT
THAT ALL THE
PEOPLE WORTH
COMMUNICATING
WITH THESE DAYS
BUY COMPUTER
GAMES - AND IT'S A
REVELATION WHICH
THEY HOPE IS GOING
TO MAKE THEM A
BLOOMING FORTUNE
TO PLOUGH INTO
BRILLIANT
PROJECTS IN AFRICA
AND THE UK.

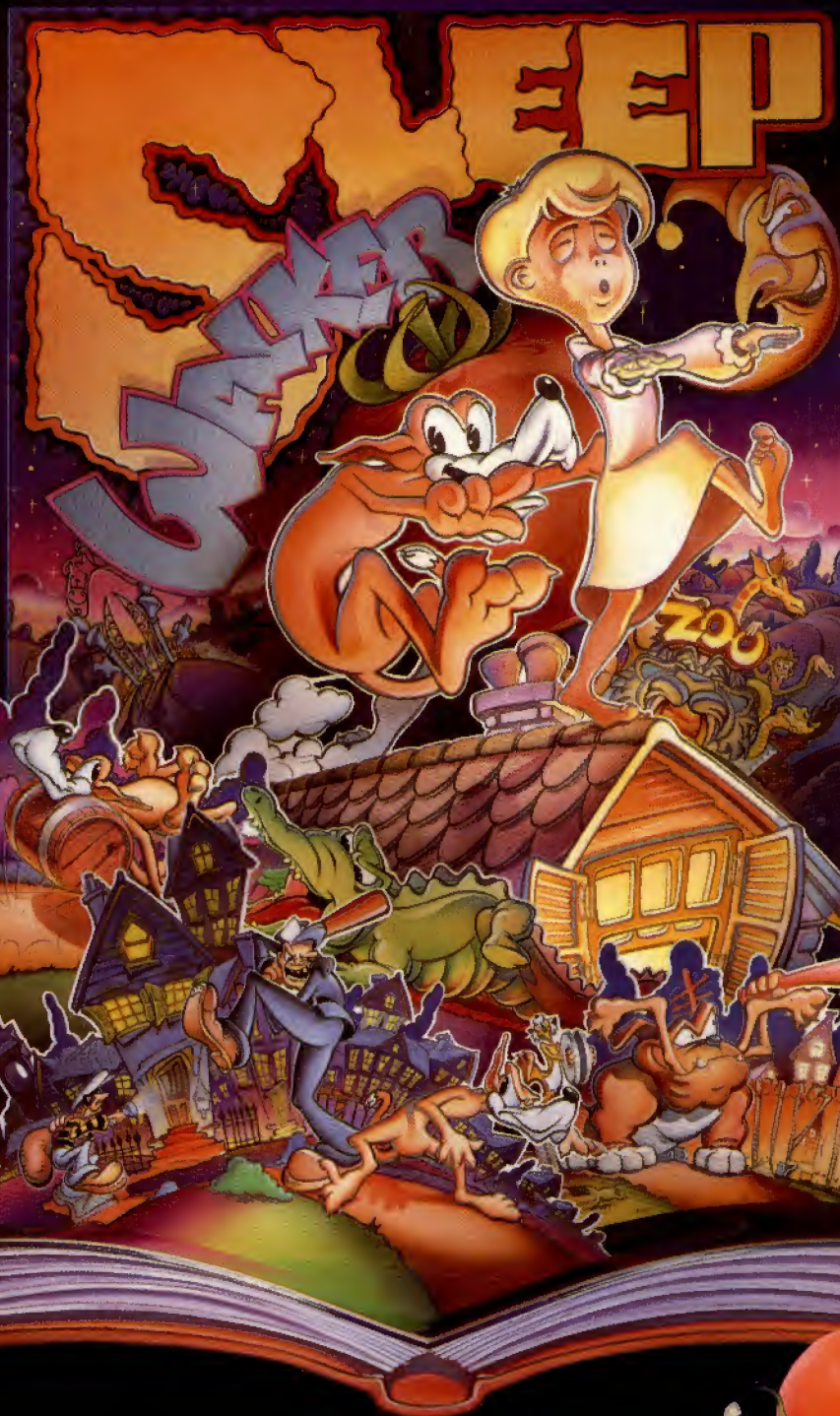
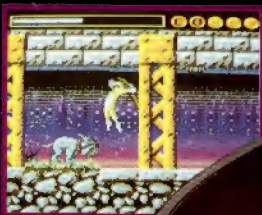


C64 (DISK & CASS.)

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IBM PC



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THE
GAME
FOR...**

**COMIC
RELIEF**

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SLEEPWALKER SPONSORSHIP TRAIL:
BUY SLEEPWALKER - A DECISION YOU
WILL NEVER REGRET - THE GAME IS
VOICED BY LENNY HENRY, AND WORKED
ON BY SOME OF BRITAIN'S FINEST
COMIC MINDS (and a couple of girls who
happened to be round that evening). A
DONATION FROM THE SALES OF
SLEEPWALKER WILL GO DIRECT TO
COMIC RELIEF.

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SCORE - TAKE ON YOUR DAD, OR
YOUR TEACHER, OR EVEN YOUR
SCHOOL IN A SLEEPWALKER
CONTEST. DREAM UP YOUR
OWN HIDEOUS
CHALLENGE TO
HARRANGUE
YOUR
FRIENDS.

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